MR LINCOLN AND MR. SEWARD.

Remarks on the Memorial Address of Charles Francis Adams on the late William H. Seward.

FIRST PAPER.

IT is to be regretted that Mr. Charles Francis Adams, in his "Memorial Address on the Life, Character, and Services of William H. Seward," should have permitted himself to do injustice to Abraham Lincoln. Any attempt to canonize Mr. Seward by detracting from the merits of his chief weakens the encomiums bestowed. Mr. Adams has claims to consideration by reason of his talents, acquirements, social position, and public service; but his estimate of the character, capacity, executive ability, and relative position of the Chief Magistrate and his Secretary of State betrays a want of just discrimination and correct knowledge of each. A greater error could scarcely be committed than to represent that Mr. Lincoln "had to deal with a superior intellectual power" when he came in contact with Mr. Seward. The reverse was the fact. In mere scholastic acquirements "Mr. Seward, never a learned man," may have had the advantage, though in this respect there was less difference than is generally supposed; while "in breadth of philosophical experience and in the force of moral discipline" the almost self-taught and reflective mind of Mr. Lincoln, which surmounted difficulties and disadvantages that his Secretary never knew, conspicuously excelled. In the executive council and in measures of administration the Secretary had influence, not always happily exercised, but the President's was the master mind. It is empty panegyric to speak of the Secretary of State as chief, or to say his suggestions, save in his own department, were more regarded or had even greater influence than those of others. His restless activity, unceasing labors, showy manifestations, and sometimes incautious exercise of questionable authority which the President deemed it impolitic to disavow, led to the impression, which Mr. Adams seems also to have imbibed, that the subordinate was the principal, and have induced him, to use his own words, to "award to one honors that clearly belong to another."

Far be it from me to derogate in the least from the merits and services of Mr. Seward, for I was a witness to his assiduity, and to some extent a participant and coadjutor with him in the labors and trials that the Administration encountered in those "troublous times." But it was not necessary in stating his merits, even in eulogy, to undervalue and misstate the worth, services, and capabilities of the remarkable man who was at the helm and guided the Government through a stormy period. Unassuming and unpretentious himself, Mr. Lincoln was the last person to wear borrowed honors. He was not afflicted with the petty jealousy of narrow minds, nor had he any apprehension that others would deprive him of just fame. He gave to Mr. Seward, as to each of his council, his generous confidence, and patiently listened if he did not always adopt or assent to the suggestions that were made. To those who knew Abraham Lincoln, or who were at all intimate with his Administration, the representation that he was subordinate to any member of his Cabinet, or that he was deficient in executive or administrative ability, is absurd. Made on a solemn occasion as was this address, and published and sent out to the world in a document which purports to be not only eulogistic but historic, it is essential that the errors thus spread abroad should be corrected. Mr. Adams had not an intimate acquaintance with Mr. Lincoln, and evidently but a slight general knowledge of his character. With admitted great disappointment and disgust he received the intelligence that this lawyer, legislator, and political student of the prairies, whom he did not know and with whom he had not associated, had been preferred by the Republican representatives at Chicago over a

but at this, he starts forward, and looks eagerly into Adelaide's face.

"Thought it was I, Miss Ada?"

"And I hated her, George!" Adelaide repeats irreverently.

Down goes George on one knee beside the little low chair, that he may get a better view of the occupant. "Adelaide, do you mean," he begins; and Adelaide, with a great bright flush coloring her cheeks, answers honestly:

"Yes, George, I mean that I hated Mary Maynard for—for your sake. I mean that I've been a fool, George, all these years. I mean that I was so used to having you for my friend that I didn't know, until I thought that Mary Maynard was taking my friend away, that——" but Adelaide's vehement confession has spent itself, and the rest of the sentence is inarticulate upon George's coat collar, and with George's arm about her. And George is quite content to ask no further questions at that moment, for he has got his heart's desire.

"So you were right in your little theory after all, Jack." Jack gives rather a sleepy yawn; and no wonder, for Mrs. Carney, just returned from a midnight interview with Adelaide, has awakened him from his first sleep to tell him her great news.

"My little theory?" he mutters sleepily. "Oh, that Adelaide is in love with King. I thought that was settled some time ago. I thought it was King you wasn't sure of—I thought ——"

"Jack, you're talking in your sleep. Didn't you hear me tell you that it's all settled between Ada and George?"

"Is it? Well, I am very glad something is settled for that foolish girl you and King are so fond of." And with these words, Jack Carney turns his face to the wall, and goes back to the dreams that Mrs. Carney has so ruthlessly interrupted.

In the days that follow, while there is much rejoicing in the house of Carney over this foolish girl, the dear discerning world, with its usual sagacity, hits the nail on the head in this wise:

So, Adelaide Payne is going to marry a poor man after all. Such grasping ambition as hers always ends in this way. She tried to catch Major Roberts, you know, and didn't succeed, poor thing! so now she takes up with that red-headed George King.

NORA PERRY.

WHENCE?

EËRILY the wind doth blow
Through the wooded hollow;
Eërily forlorn and low,
Tremulous echoes follow!

Whence the weird wind's tortured plaint?
Burden hopeless, dreary,
As the anguished tones that faint
Down the *miserere?*

Whence? From far-off seas its moan!
Darksome waves and lonely,
Where the tempest, overblown,
Leaves a death-calm only.

Thence it caught the awful cry
Of some lost pale swimmer,
O'er whose drowning brain and eye
Life grows dim and dimmer,—

Ere the billows claim their prey,
Settling stern and lonely,
Where the storm clouds, rolled away,
Leave death-silence only!

So with pain the wind-heart sighs;
Through its sad commotion
Weary sea-tides sob, and rise
Wailing hints of Ocean!

Hist! oh hist! as spreads the mist,
Wood and hill-slope doming,
By no grace of starlight kissed,
'Mid the shadowy gloaming.

Drearier grows the wind, more drear
Echoes shuddering follow,
Till a place of doom and fear
Seems that haunted hollow!

PAUL H. HAYNE.

Senator from the Empire State with whom he was intimate and familiar, who had long official experience, which he seems to have considered essential, was acquainted with legislative management, and whose political and party sympathies accorded with his own. His prejudices as well as his partiality were excited, and from the beginning he misconceived the character and undervalued and underrated the capabilities and qualities of one of the most sagacious and remarkable men of the age.

In his statements of the political career of Mr. Seward, and of the structure and condition of parties from the days of the Monroe administration, one is compelled to believe the eulogist has, as he expresses it, plunged in "the Serbonian bog of politics." Yet politics are an essential part of the history of the country, its men and the times, and the author himself has made politics the study of his life. Mr. Seward was also emphatically a party politician. He had a fondness for political studies and employment, and was at all times active and faithful in the service of each of the several political parties to which he belonged. Whether "the chief characteristic of his mind was its breadth of view" may be questioned by some who look to his general course and form their opinion of his "characteristics" from it and his acts. If not, as is asserted, a "philosopher studying politics," he was kind and affable, of a genial temperament, calm and subdued under reverses, and to his credit never manifested the malevolence and acerbity which too often characterize intense political partisans. Among his party associates he always occupied a decidedly prominent place, by reason of his urbanity as well as of his ability. He was quick of apprehension, prolific in suggestions and expedients, and endowed, if not with eloquence, with a readiness and facility of expression in speech or writing which enabled him in consultations, and when associated with others, to carry personal influence equal to any, and much greater than most of his contemporaries. He had not, however, an executive mind which could of itself magnetize and subordinate others, or the mental strength to take the helm and steadily guide and direct the policy of the Government or of a party. Henry Clay once said, "Mr. Seward is a man of no convictions." This was not strictly true, yet he was not a man of fixed principles, whose convictions would not yield to circumstances or be modified by expedients, some of which might be scarcely worthy of consideration. He could be as tenacious as any in adhering to a measure or policy so long as his associates, or those friends in whom he trusted, maintained the position; but alone he had not the will, self-reliance, and obstinacy to plant himself on the rock of principle, meet the storm, and abide the consequences.

Mr. Seward was a politician—a partisan politician of the central school—with talents more versatile than profound; was more of a conservative than a reformer, with no great original conceptions of right, nor systematic ideas of administration. So far as his party adopted a reforming policy he went with it, and he was with it also in opposing actual reforms by the Democrats. The representation that he was a veteran reformer, or the leader of the anti-slavery movement or of the Republican party, is a mistake. He was neither an Abolitionist nor a Free-soiler, nor did he unite with the Republicans until the Whig party virtually ceased to exist in most of the States, and was himself one of the last to give up that party, of which he had been from its commencement and in all its phases an active member. It was with reluctance he finally yielded, when the feeble remnant of that organization disbanded. The Republican party, with which he then became associated, was not of mushroom growth. It was years maturing. Mr. Seward, whose friends claim for him its paternity, was a Whig at its inception. He neither rocked its cradle nor identified himself with its youth, but gave it cheering words, as he had other ephemeral organizations, in order to weaken the Democrats and help the Whigs. Faithful to party, he adhered to the Whigs under all circumstances. It was his marked public characteristic. Not until the Whig party was prostrate—a skeleton without strength or vitality—did he yield and embark his political fortunes in the great uprising. In the destruction of the political scaffolding which he and his friends had constructed, perished the hopes and labors of years. To relinquish the machinery and organization which by lobby management under

a skilful leader had become powerful and controlling in the Empire State of the Union, was a sacrifice not willingly made, and when made it was not in the anti-slavery interest, but with a covert design to perpetuate the Albany dynasty under the name of Republican. The Albany lobby was never an abolitionist lobby or an anti-slavery lobby, nor was the organization or its candidate. Any attempt to represent him, or those associated with him, as occupying a more advanced position on the anti-slavery question than those who were of the "Jefferson school," is rather eulogy than fact. In the presidential contest of 1848, when the domination of previously existing parties was broken, and a stand was made against the expansion of slavery and its extension into the territories from which it had been excluded, Mr. Seward declined to connect himself with the Free-soil or Anti-slavery cause, but clung to the Whig party which opposed the movement, and voted for a candidate who was a slave-owner in preference to a statesman and citizen of his own State who was not.

The disposition of the financial and tariff questions which for years divided parties under renowned leaders, and the Mexican war with its results during the Polk administration, affected the political status of individuals and also the organization of parties. Clay, Calhoun, and Webster, the intellectual and imperious triumvirate who combined against Jackson fifteen years before, were each infirm from increasing years, and on the descending grade of life and influence. In 1849 they retained, individually, but a feeble hold on their followers. Van Buren and Benton were no longer formidable. With the departure of old questions, the old contestants were passing away. It was just at this period, when old political parties were in a fragmentary and transition state, that Mr. Seward first entered the national councils as a Senator from the great State of New York. No time could have been more propitious or circumstances more favorable for a genuine reformer—a statesman of mental grasp and real executive talent—to have gathered up, concentrated and organized the disturbed political elements which were dissatisfied with government abuses and central aggressive power in behalf of an institution which was tolerated but disliked, and its extension and aggressions resisted. This was an opportunity for a statesman, if possessed of the indispensable executive ability, to have made himself the leader of a great movement. But Mr. Seward did not prove himself equal to the position. He failed to raise the standard and rally the host. He was one with others, not their superior nor their chief. Though quick of apprehension and not insensible to the new aspect of affairs and the change that was taking place, he had neither the resolution nor the inclination to abandon his party, "break up the remnants of party ties," and place himself at the head of a popular demonstration for immortal principles. He had been a life-long party follower—had trod the paths and ruts of party obediently and faithfully, and been so trained and disciplined, so accustomed to look up to others to lead, that no will or independence was left him at fifty to take the initiative in a new departure. He had the sagacity to see that new questions were entering into our politics and old ones were becoming obsolete, but possessed not the courage to abandon the old, nor the organizing and executive talent to become the chief in a new movement. Contrary to good instruction and sound principle, he and the Albany managers attempted to put this new Republican wine into old Whig bottles, under the delusive idea that the effete and decaying Whig organization could receive and hold this fermenting political element without bursting. He made able speeches on the rising questions, as did others; but the Senate produced no commanding mind, with "clarion voice" and magnetic power, to rally and lead. Mr. Seward had adventitious advantages above others. He had been Governor of the largest State in the Union, was its representative in Congress, and stood the peer of any of his associates on the floor of the Senate, but only the peer. Neither in Congress nor subsequently in the Cabinet did he display the administrative or executive talent that was anticipated, or which partisan admirers claim for him at the expense of Mr. Lincoln.

In closing his "Memorial Address" Mr. Adams alludes to the friends of Mr. Seward, and particularly one who survives, "whose singularly disinterested labor has been to effect the elevation of others to power, and never his own; and to whose

remarkable address I strongly suspect Mr. Seward owed many obligations of that kind." No person in the least conversant with the two men could have heard or read the address without a conviction, even if no acknowledgment had been made, that the spirit of the friend inspired and imbued the orator with the partialities, prejudices, misconceptions, and errors which pervade the address and are manifest on almost every page.

Mr. Thurlow Weed, who for forty years was the ruling mind of the party with which he was associated in New York, possessed remarkable qualities as a party manager. The character and services of Mr. Seward can never be delineated or understood without mention of this *alter ego*, who was not only his *fidus Achates*, but it may without disparagement be said was also, with some radical failings, his *Mentor*. Weed, a man of strong, rough native intellect, without much early culture, was a few years the senior of Mr. Seward, whose more polished and facile mind adapted itself to the other—clung to it as the ivy to the oak—and the two became inseparable in politics. When Mr. Seward was about to "choose his side," Weed was the editor of a paper in western New York, which fomented the wild, fanatical, and proscriptive Anti-masonic excitement that for a brief period swept with uncontrollable and unreasoning fury that section of country. An organized party was formed on the narrow basis of hate, intolerance, and proscription of every man who belonged to the Masonic fraternity. Under this Anti-masonic banner, of which Weed was a champion leader, Mr. Seward enlisted and commenced his public official career, was its candidate in that district, and elected by that party to the Senate of New York. Many will believe that he did not manifest great "breadth of view," nor prove himself a profound "philosopher studying politics," nor display the "capacity to play a noble part on the more spacious theatre of State affairs," when he entered the Senate of New York an Anti-masonic partisan under the guidance of Thurlow Weed. But the friendship commenced under those auspices continued unabated to the death of the junior, and evinces itself in the "Memorial Address" which attempts to place Mr. Seward above the chief to whom he was subordinate, and "award to him honors that clearly belong to another."

Mr. Weed possessed capacity which rightly directed might have been of service to the country and to mankind. He was not without good qualities when party and personal favorites or opponents were not concerned; but he was wanting in political morality, and was unscrupulous in his party intrigues—often and without hesitation resorting to schemes to carry a measure in the Legislature, or to secure an election, which scarcely savored of high morality.

When the Anti-masonic fervor subsided and the organization died out, Messrs. Seward and Weed became identified with the opponents of the Jackson administration and the supporters of "the American system"—a centralizing policy. The address represents that "the political unity of the country under its present form of government naturally divides itself into two periods of nearly equal length." One, which commenced with Washington and closed with Monroe, related chiefly to questions of foreign policy. The other was on the subject of slavery. There is no such natural division. The statement is neither politically nor historically correct, but an arbitrary assumption, warranted by neither history nor facts. The slavery question in no form or shape entered into the election or administration of General Jackson or the great parties of that period. Other absorbing subjects, relating to the bank, to finance, to the tariff and internal improvements, combined under what in the party nomenclature of the day was styled the "American system," were the political and party issues for a quarter of a century succeeding the Monroe administration. It was then, "at the outset of Mr. Seward's career," when there was no controversy or difference in State or national parties or politics on the subject of slavery, that Weed and "the philosopher studying politics" chose their side, opposed Jackson, supported Clay, advocated a national bank, a protective tariff, internal improvements by the federal government, and the whole centralizing "American system." There was no identification of either of the great opposing parties of that day with slavery or anti-slavery. From 1828, when Jackson was elected, to the election of Taylor in

1848, neither party made the subject of slavery a test question, or part of its political creed. Opposition to General Jackson and his administration, and to the policy initiated under him, combined the adverse elements and was the groundwork of the Whig party, to which in all its phases Mr. Seward was a devoted adherent. A coalition was formed by the Whigs with the nullifiers, who were slave-holders, and at a later day secessionists, against the patriotic old chieftain who put forth the executive power for the maintenance of the federal union. But the tariff, not slavery, was the pretext for nullification.

Then, and until some time past the meridian of his life—a period of more than twenty years—Mr. Seward was, for reasons doubtless satisfactory to himself, one of the most zealous and active party men in the country. With him every side-issue, every controverted question, every element of discontent against the Government, was courted, fanned, favored, and made subservient to party. This embraces the period when, according to the address, Mr. Seward chose his side adversely to the organization of the Jefferson school, was "too democratic for the Democrats," was "far more practical than anything ever taught by Jefferson." This peculiar democracy and anti-masonry constitute what the address describes as "the various phenomena of Mr. Seward's public life," but which his contemporaries understood to be political partisanship of a very active and decided character. In New York and throughout the country Mr. Seward was known and recognized as a busy and efficient party man in the Whig organization, and one of the leaders to whom the party in that State was under obligations for partisan services. Whatever abilities or qualities of mind he possessed—and they were in some respects remarkable—were given earnestly and cheerfully to that party and its centralizing "American system" policy. In their party councils in New York, Thurlow Weed became the supreme manager, and guiding, controlling spirit, always declining office. Mr. Seward was the oracle, and received the official honors. When anti-masonry was on the wane, and after Mr. Seward entered the New York Senate, Weed removed to Albany, where he established a paper and exercised with skill and effect his love of intrigue. He soon organized and became chief of a lobby which had an odious notoriety, and which, while it gave him a certain influence in New York, was viewed with abhorrence by many, with distrust by the whole country. His management was, however, adroit; and the lobby under his direction, though often profligate, unscrupulous, and always debauching and corrupting, contributed at times largely to the success of his party and the promotion of Mr. Seward. The personal influence of Weed was enhanced and made effective by his apparent self-abnegation and uniform and persistent refusal to accept any office himself, while all around him were seeking office and legislative favors. His labors were not as disinterested as represented; for if he declined place he loved power, and it was his pride and ambition to manage the government of New York when the Whigs were successful, to say who might hold office, to control measures, and to prescribe the policy and direct the movements of his party—not always perhaps judiciously or honestly in either respect; but the administration, its measures and men, were nevertheless his. The mental force, magnetism, system, and will of the man were artful, but imperious and indisputable with his party, yet were shrewdly and in general discreetly exercised. Mr. Seward, ever preadvised and consulted, was his exponent in the Legislature and in party councils, and the advocate or opponent of the measures and men as prescribed, with his concurrence, by Weed. Although the latter never sought office for himself, he always wanted high place for Seward, who was his cherished and almost idolized political offspring, with whom he never disagreed, and who never went counter to him. The two always acted in concert. It was interesting to witness their operations. Weed's mind had by far the greatest vigor, Seward's the most pliability. It was so in their anti-masonic days. It was so to the close. Weed's apparently singularly disinterested labors were selfish, yet given with devoted and unsparing fidelity to his friend Seward, who might wear the honors while he was the substantial power behind. Mr. Adams "strongly suspects Mr. Seward owed many obligations" to Mr. Weed. It was never suspicion among those who knew

them, but an unquestioned and indisputable fact. Mr. Seward himself acknowledged it with apparent satisfaction. I once heard him declare, others being present, "Seward is Weed and Weed is is Seward. What I do Weed approves. What he says I endorse. We are one." "I am sorry to hear the remark," said the late Chief Justice Chase, "for while I would strain a point to oblige Mr. Seward, I feel under no obligations to do anything for the special benefit of Mr. Weed. The two are not and never can be one to me."

Mr. Adams declares, as historical truth:

> The fact is beyond contradiction that no person ever before nominated, with any reasonable probability of success, had so little of public service to show for his reward. . . . The President elect was [in the winter of 1861] still at home in Illinois giving no signs of life. . . That which appeared most appalling was the fact that we were to have for our guide through this perilous strife a person selected partly on account of the absence of positive qualities, so far as was known to the public, and absolutely without the advantage of any experience in national affairs, beyond the little that can be learned by an occupation of two years in the House of Representatives. . . . . It was clear, at least to me, that our chance of success would rest upon an executive council composed of the wisest and most experienced men that could be found. So it seemed absolutely indispensable on every account that not only should Mr. Seward have been early secured in a prominent post, but that his advice at least should have been asked in regard to the completion of that organization. But Mr. Lincoln as yet knew little of all this. His mind had not even opened to the nature of the contest. From his secluded home in the heart of Illinois, he was only taking measure of his geographical relations and party services, and beginning his operations where others commonly leave off, at the smaller end. Hence it was at quite a late period of the session before he had disclosed his intention to put Mr. Seward in the most prominent place. . . . It is the duty of history, in dealing with all human events, to do strict justice in discriminating between persons, and by no means to award to one honors that clearly belong to another. I must then affirm, without hesitation, that in the history of our government, down to this hour, no experiment so rash has ever been made as that of elevating to the head of affairs a man with so little previous preparation for his task as Mr. Lincoln. . . . Mr. Lincoln could not fail soon to perceive the fact that whatever estimate he might put on his own natural judgment, he had to deal with a superior in native intellectual power, in extent of acquirement, in breadth of philosophic experience, and in the force of moral discipline. On the other hand, Mr. Seward could not have been long blind to the deficiencies of his chief in these respects.

Those who read and give credit to these representations, and others of similar purport through the address, will receive very erroneous impressions of the two men to whom they relate, as well as of the administration to which they belonged, and in which each bore an important part. It was not Mr. Lincoln who conformed himself and his policy and general views to Mr. Seward, but it was Mr. Seward who adapted himself with ease and address to Mr. Lincoln, and, failing to influence, adopted and carried out the opinions and decisions of his chief. In that respect—flexibility and facility of change among friends—no person possessed greater dexterity and tact than the Secretary of State. It made him a pleasant assistant, companion, and coadjutor; but his character not being positive, nor his convictions absolute, he was deficient in executive will and ability. Mr. Lincoln, who is represented as ignorant of the condition of the country when elected, and "whose mind had not yet opened to the nature of the crisis," better understood, if we may judge from what they did, the popular sentiment and the public requirements than senator or representative, ambassador or cabinet minister. In his "secluded home" he was not an inattentive and indifferent observer, but watched and studied public measures and public necessities, and more correctly appreciated the actual condition of affairs than the heated politicians engaged in factious strife for party ascendancy in the national and State capitals. While statesmen and legislators of "experience" in Congress were waiting and watching for new appointments, neglectful of the coming storm, anticipating apparently nothing beyond a severe party conflict, "utterly without spirit" to concert measures—exhausting their time and energies in frivolous wrangles, and accomplishing nothing—with confessedly "no leader at hand equal" to the emergency—the President elect, "in the heart of Illinois," comprehended the situation, and rose above merely personal and party contentions to the dangers and necessities of the country. Wholly powerless, however, he was compelled to witness without being able to prevent the disintegration in progress, and the accumulating embarrassments that were soon to confront him, without a single effective demonstration from any of

his professed friends in Congress, who prided themselves on their superiority, and on an official "experience" in which they deemed him deficient, but which they considered indispensable for a competent executive. Of what value was the "experience" of senator or representative in that crisis? What executive or legislative ability did they exhibit? Experience rightly improved is valuable in public official life, but it is not to be denied that it often blunts the mind, and by familiarizing renders it indifferent to evil.

The two great parties of Democrat and Whig were scarcely more apart in their character or more diverse in their purposes than the opposing elements which met in convention at Chicago in 1860. It was by no means a personal contest. Mr. Adams seems unconscious of the fact that there were among Republicans, and in that convention, conflicting views and policies; that a majority was opposed to corrupt legislation and the vicious schemes of managing lobbies, whether at Albany or Washington, as well as hostile to the extension and aggression of slavery. It was the misfortune of Mr. Seward that he was associated with and the candidate of the most offensive lobby combination of that date. He was not accused or suspected of receiving pecuniary benefit himself from the practices of that class of jobbing party lobbyists, but he was thought to be indifferent if not assenting to their practices, and was their candidate. They were active in his favor, were conspicuously instrumental in pressing him forward as the coming man, announcing him as the Republican candidate, and used extraordinary means to secure delegates to the nominating convention in his interest. These party managers had, like Mr. Seward, adhered to the Whig organization so long as it existed. After its abandonment they became active members of the Republican party, and strove to be foremost in all its proceedings. But there was a large element—the result showed a very decided majority—of the Republicans averse to any nomination or movement which would tend to transfer Albany intrigues to Washington, and introduce the debasing practices on the Hudson into our national politics.

When the convention met at Chicago, the Albany programme and management was obvious. New York and Michigan, under the Whig machinery which with all its appliances was still in force in those States, though under the name of Republicanism, pushed solidly for their candidate. Massachusetts was supposed to have been as thoroughly attended to, but a small minority dissented and went with the majority of the States and delegates from New England in opposition to Mr. Seward. These three States constituted his substantial strength, but under Albany manipulation and management some of the small frontier and border States, and the territories which were permitted to vote in convention though they could not in election, added to his force, and gave him, as the address states, a plurality on the first ballot. A second ballot increased his vote but eleven, when it was evident the Albany programme could not succeed, and the whole personal intrigue was demolished. The lobby measures and tactics, and all the dramatic parade and performance in the streets and hotels of Chicago, failed. Disappointed and overwhelmed, Weed refused to return to New York, but left for the Northwest, and some days later made his appearance at Springfield, where he had an interview with Mr. Lincoln in "his secluded abode." It was with *fidus Achates* still a personal matter, and if Mr. Seward could not be President he wished him in a position where he could be potential in the coming administration, believing with Mr. Adams that Mr. Lincoln had "little previous preparation for his task," and that Mr. Seward was his superior in "native intellectual power." A very serious mistake on the part of both. Members of Congress expected, and took it for granted, that a man in official position and of political experience, with hereditary party claims, and a personal following as well as pecuniary backers, such as could be found only in the commercial metropolis, would be selected. Others, however, wished a liberal candidate, wedded to no past organization, and untainted by and wholly disconnected with legislative or congressional corruption and intrigue.

Mr. Lincoln was the choice of the convention, not only from a belief that he had ability for the place, but because he was a Republican from the start, a private citizen, honest sagacious, and firm, with no

vicious connections or debasing political associations or antecedents. It was not "the ghosts of the higher law and of the irrepressible conflict" which made Mr. Lincoln a candidate, for he and Mr. Seward stood alike in that respect; nor was it "the element of bargain and management manipulated by adepts at intrigue" which secured his nomination, for the "adepts at intrigue" were active for another.

The convention and the people preferred Abraham Lincoln, in what Mr. Adams calls "his secluded abode in the heart of Illinois," to Senator Seward with all his experience and metropolitan surroundings, because he was more truly the representative of the Republican movement. Nor did the country regret, or ever have cause to regret, that preference, whatever may have been the disgust of disappointed officials and expectants in Washington or elsewhere. Time, and trials far greater than have ever been the lot of any other chief magistrate, tested and proved the wisdom of their choice. Mr. Lincoln, intelligent, deliberate, patriotic, and determined, if not courtly bred, had the executive ability to guide the ship of state through a pitiless storm. Mr. Seward, with his restless, flexible mind, prolific in expedients, but with no well-defined policy, fixed political principles, or strong tenacity of purpose, could not have wielded the executive power successfully, or navigated the ship of state in safety at that period, could he have been nominated and elected, of which last there are very grave doubts. There have been previous occasions, as in 1828 and again in 1840, when all the calculations of politicians, statesmen of experience, and men in place, have been wrecked by an upheaval of popular sentiment, and candidates taken from the ranks—"secluded abodes"—were carried forward on the mighty wave of public, if sometimes mistaken opinion, to a triumphant election.

Mr. Adams fails to mention, and probably never realized, the primary differences in the Republican party which caused results so unexpected to him and the politicians in Congress. So unaware was Mr. Seward of the true condition of things when the convention assembled at Chicago—so convinced that the Albany programme would succeed—that he left his seat in the Senate and repaired to Auburn in the confident expectation of there receiving a committee which would inform him of his nomination. The adverse blow was severe; but more readily than many of his friends did he submit to the great disappointment, and with his usual tact accepted and acquiesced in results which he could not control.

The "Memorial Address" represents it to have been an error that Mr. Seward was not "early secured in a prominent post" by the President elect, and says that "his advice at least should have been asked in regard to the completion of the organization." The reverse of this was a matter of duty, for the wishes of Mr. Seward and his special friends were not the policy and intention of Mr. Lincoln and the Republicans. Mr. Lincoln knew that the services of Mr. Seward were at his disposal in case the Republicans were successful, even before he was elected, and it was impressed upon him most earnestly as a necessity immediately thereafter. Twice at least did Thurlow Weed, the faithful managing friend of Mr. Seward, the *fidus Achates* "to whom he owed many obligations of that kind," visit Springfield in Mr. Seward's behalf. The views of Mr. Lincoln in regard to the composition of his executive council, and the material of which it should be constructed, were so widely different from those of Mr. Seward and his Albany associates, that no disposition was felt to ask his or their advice on the subject. He had the selection of Mr. Seward in his mind as early as that of any of his associates, but he had no more thought of consulting him as regarded the other members of his Cabinet than of advising with them or either of them as to his Secretary of State. The members were to be his advisers, not Mr. Seward's, to aid and assist him in the administration of the government, instead of any one of his subordinates, all of whom were expected to coöperate for the general welfare.

Mr. Lincoln was modest, kind, and unobtrusive, but had nevertheless sturdy intellectual independence, wonderful self-reliance, and, in his unpretending way, great individuality. Though ever willing to listen to others and to avail himself of suggestions from any quarter which he deemed valuable, he never for a moment was unmindful of his position or of proper self-respect, or felt that he was "depend-

ent" on any one for the faithful and competent discharge of any duty upon which he entered. There were details in each department with which he did not interfere or attempt to make himself familiar —a routine which the Secretaries respectively discharged. Of these the President had a general knowledge, and the executive control of each and all. In this respect the Secretary of State had the same relation to the President as his colleagues in the other departments. Mr. Lincoln well understood the nature of the differences which existed in the Republican party—the causes which had influenced the members of the Chicago Convention, and the policy which it was expected would characterize his administration. His sympathies, feelings, and views were in harmony and full accord with those who had secured his nomination; and, faithful in his convictions and to his trust, he would not permit those who selected him to be disappointed, nor allow himself to be diverted from that policy nor to organize a Cabinet opposed to it.

But the same influences which operated and were defeated at Chicago in nominating a candidate obtruded themselves on the President elect in attempts to control his selection of his executive council. Mr. Seward and his special friends, who still clung to the old Whig party, and hoped by some device to renew and prolong it, were apprehensive that there would be too strong an infusion of the Democratic element in the Cabinet. They did not propose to wholly exclude men of Democratic antecedents, but it was urged that the Whig element should, for the sake of harmony, and efficient, concerted, united action, have a decided preponderance. Mr. Lincoln quietly listened to these representations, but he well understood the object, and avoided the path to which they invited him. Instead of yielding to them, he was confirmed in his convictions that the Republican policy which led to his nomination and election was right, and should be maintained independent of old parties and old organizations. Discarding the importunities of the Albany mission which visited him in Springfield, he brought into his Cabinet an equal number from each of the old opposing parties, which would enable him to get the opinions of men of differing political views. But although this was his purpose from the first, he was wisely reticent, and kept his own counsel. When, however, his intentions finally became known, and the names of the gentlemen whom he proposed to call to his side were ascertained, there was an emphatic dissent on the part of the special managing friends of Mr. Seward. Two of the gentlemen were specially excepted to as extreme Democrats, antagonistic to Mr. Seward, who had been instrumental against him, especially at Chicago, and to whom he could scarcely be reconciled in administrative duties. But, objectionable as these men were, the opposition to Mr. Chase was still more decisive; and it was intimated that if these gentlemen, particularly the last referred to, were to receive Cabinet appointments, Mr. Seward might decline the association. This intimation had no effect on Mr. Lincoln, nor did it in the least change his determination. While willing to accept and desirous to have the services of Mr. Seward and the support of his friends, he did not feel that "it was absolutely indispensable on every account" to secure him above others, or to the exclusion of others, or to be governed by him and his likes or dislikes in the choice of confidants or the make-up of his political family. In point of fact, there was strong opposition among his friends to Mr. Seward's appointment. He had no apprehensions whatever that he should not be able to have Mr. Seward in his council; and if the gentlemen whom he selected had not in their party antecedents, or in certain fundamental political opinions agreed, but were Republicans in accord with him on present questions, that was sufficient for his purpose. Old things in parties were with him done away. There was a new departure in political organizations. His administration and his Cabinet were to be Republican irrespective of past parties. But schemes to secure a Seward Cabinet commenced early, and were persistently followed up to the inauguration. Weed did not return to Albany after the Chicago nomination until he visited Springfield and had an interview with Mr. Lincoln in his "secluded abode." This was the beginning, and nothing was accomplished. Late in the summer Weed met certain gentlemen in Saratoga, when

something definite respecting the Cabinet in the event of Mr. Lincoln's election was attempted. After the election Mr. Lincoln was urged to visit Auburn and consult Mr. Seward, who "had a plurality of votes on the first ballot" at Chicago, but he declined the invitation. It was winter, the address says, "at quite a late period of the session, before he had disclosed his intention to place Mr. Seward in the most prominent place in the Cabinet."

Most of the facts in relation to the formation of the Cabinet I received from the mouth of Mr. Lincoln, who had apparently no concealments on the subject. On the day of the presidential election, November 3d, 1860, he said, the telegraph operator at Springfield invited him to occupy his room and obtain intelligence of the result as it was received. About two o'clock on Wednesday morning sufficient information had come in to leave no doubt of his election. He then retired, but hardly to sleep. Although fatigued and exhausted, he got but little rest. Oppressed with the overwhelming responsibility that was upon him, which in the excitement of the campaign he had not fully realized, he felt the necessity of relief and assistance to sustain him in the not distant future. He did, he said, what probably all his predecessors had done—looked about him at once for the men on whom he could rely, and who would be his support in the trials that were before him. The reliable and marked men of the country were in his mind, but there were many other things to be taken into consideration—different influences, sectional and political, to be reconciled. He did not again sleep until he had constructed the framework of his Cabinet. It was essentially the same as that with which four months later he commenced his administration. This voluntary and unsolicited statement was from the man whose mind, Mr. Adams says, months after his election "had not even opened to the nature of the crisis." Circumstances and extended details which Mr. Lincoln gave, relating to individuals and movements, need not be here introduced. This generalization is evidence that even at that period he had a policy and purpose, which he carried into effect, wholly distinct from and independent of the plan which Mr. Seward and his friends had marked out. He preferred to select his own advisers, and did so instead of permitting Mr. Seward to do it for him. He had in view a Republican, not a Whig administration, and therefore required and formed a Republican Cabinet. There was but one member of it appointed on the special, urgent recommendation and advice of Mr. Seward and his friends, who preferred him to Mr. Chase for the Treasury, and that gentleman was at an early day, with Mr. Seward's approval, transferred to hyperborean regions, for reasons never publicly and distinctly made known.

The unhappy condition of the country during the winter of 1861 is not overstated in the "Memorial Address." It was as well understood and as deeply deplored at Springfield and in remote sections as at Washington, where Congress frittered away its time and pursued a course as unpatriotic as, and scarcely less reprehensible than the Administration which proclaimed its inability to coerce a State. The President elect witnessed the factious and disunion proceedings with unutterable distress, but he was powerless; and it was among the most painful afflictions of his varied and eventful life, to know and feel that he could do nothing to arrest threatened and impending calamities. Through the weary winter months that intervened between the election in November and the inauguration in March, he beheld the executive authority paralyzed, or wielded in the interest of those who threatened the integrity of the Union. Mr. Adams says:

> Treason had crept into the very heart of the Cabinet, and a policy had been secretly at work to paralyze rather than to fortify the resources of the executive. Everything was drifting at the mercy of the wind and waves. . . . A message was sent to Congress by Mr. Buchanan lamenting the fact of what he chose to call a secession of several States, but coupling with it a denial of any power to coerce them. This was in its essence an abandonment of all right to control popular resistance in that form. In the condition things were at that moment, with a Cabinet divided and both branches of the legislature utterly without spirit to concert measures, the effect was equivalent to disintegration.

What executive or legislative energy or ability was demonstrated by Congress at that crisis? Mr. Lincoln was a private citizen, "at home in Illinois," while this "secession of several States" was going

on, holding no office, exercising no authority, "giving no signs of life," Mr. Adams says; but well aware that every movement and every expression of his were watched and weighed not only by secessionists, but by men in place who did nothing to relieve but much to oppose and embarrass him in the duties upon which he was soon to enter. Mr. Seward was at that time in the Senate, in a position where a disinterested and patriotic statesman of experience, sagacity, and foresight, possessed of an energetic, capable, and master mind, and of executive power, would be expected to detect and expose error and make a decisive stand against avowed and approaching treason —treason which had in fact already, says the address, crept "into the very heart of the Cabinet." But there was not a measure of resistance, scarcely a note of alarm or even of apprehension, from the New York Senator, who "received a plurality of votes" for President on the first ballot in the Chicago Convention, and who was at the time not only a Senator but the accredited Secretary of State of the incoming Administration. To him, an actor in an exalted official position, a Senator of reputed sagacity and known experience, who was in daily personal and official intercourse with men of all parties at the seat of government, the President elect from his "secluded abode," and the whole country indeed, naturally looked with some degree of expectation, if not of great confidence, for decisive action, or at least correct information as to the state of affairs and probable results. Mr. Seward had a theory, but not such as to either inspire hope or create alarm. It was of a pacific tendency, and calculated to calm apprehensions in that "perilous emergency." He anticipated, and said there would be, harmony and reconciliation within ninety days. If sincere in his prophetic assertions, he did not exhibit intelligence or statesmanship superior to Mr. Lincoln; if insincere, he was even less reliable and faithful. Mr. Lincoln had the inclination and certainly the wish to believe that his selected counsellor, who was in the Senate, with opportunities superior to himself or any other man to know the facts, was correct in his predictions and conclusions. Unfortunately Mr. Seward was mistaken. Mr. Adams says: "Wiseacres have commented on his failure of sagacity in making overconfident predictions. But what was he to do in the face of all the nations of the earth?" He certainly was not to falsify the truth; he was not to sacrifice his integrity, nor did the "wiseacres" accuse him of any such sacrifice when they "commented on his failure of sagacity." It is to be presumed that he believed what he asserted, even if it makes him a less "sagacious statesman" than is represented in the "Memorial Address." His sagacity is not to be fortified at the expense of his veracity. The truth is, Mr. Seward did not, even at that late day, realize to its full extent the nature of the impending conflict, but viewed it as a severe and embittered party controversy, not unlike others the country had experienced, and which, being really causeless, he hoped and believed time and the change of administration would pacify. Many of his associates as well as himself were of the party of expedients, and persuaded him and themselves that if once in power he could so manage as to allay dissension, prevent secession, and effect a restoration of Union feeling. Hence, without any substantial reason, nothing but past "experience," he predicted the speedy peaceful solution of a dispute or controversy that to others looked formidable, and which soon not only threatened but assailed the Union. His predictions were in harmony with the policy, so far as he had a policy, of himself and friends. He was for peace, and had faith, hope, and confidence that peace would be preserved by some expedient, device, or luck—he knew not how—and he therefore predicted it.

Mr. Lincoln was comforted by the assurances and predictions of his future minister then in the Senate, but he had apprehensions which no prophetic declarations could entirely put at rest. Results have shown that "in this perilous interval" he, "in his secluded abode in the heart of Illinois," with unpretending yet undoubted sagacity, had a more correct knowledge and better appreciation of the condition of affairs—foresaw with more accurate perception the threatened difficulties—than the experienced politicians who predicted and promised peace. Those who best knew the two men are aware that their minds were widely different inherently and in their organization. The President was greatly superior in in-

tellectual strength and vigor, had the more solid and substantial qualities, more earnestness and sincerity, a greater grasp and comprehension, a more intuitive and far-seeing sagacity, came almost instinctively to right conclusions, had more correct convictions, greater self-reliance, greater firmness of purpose, a stricter adherence to principles which he believed to be correct; points that were best understood by those who knew him best.

The Secretary of State had, with higher culture and scholastic attainments, quickness of apprehension, wonderful facility and aptness in adapting himself to circumstances and exigencies which he could not control, and a fertility in expedients, with a dexterity in adopting or dismissing plans and projected schemes, unsurpassed; qualities which made him an acceptable companion, if not always safe adviser, but never the superior and controlling executive mind. His training and habit were partisan, and his acts often impulsive; but, accustomed through his whole official life to consult a faithful friend, to whose judgment and guidance he deferred, he had not in great emergencies the self-reliance, energy, will, and force of character which are essential to a truly great and strong executive. He sometimes acted rashly, not always wisely. But if he had not the will which is necessary for a chief, he had the sustaining qualities which are invaluable in serving a capable leader with whom he might be identified. He was subordinate to Abraham Lincoln, and deferred to him as he had deferred to Thurlow Weed—conformed to the views of the former as he had for thirty years to those of the latter—and assumed credit in the one case as it had always been given him in the other, without being the originating and directing mind in either. After the subsidence of the anti-masonic excitement on which he was first carried into office, he became a Whig, and through all its changes and mutations, until the organization was extinguished, he "adhered to the party."

Mr. Lincoln, on the contrary, was divested of partisanship beyond almost any man in active public life; not that he was insensible to party and its claims, but they were secondary and subordinate to principles—the means rather than the end. He "drifted," as he used to say, into the Whig organization at the beginning; his associations were chiefly there, but he had no particular veneration for the party or regard for many of its professed doctrines. Time, experience, reflection, and observation weakened whatever feeling or sympathy he once entertained for mere party. Unlike Mr. Seward, he had no reluctance in giving up the Whig organization; no lingering affection for it, nor any hesitation to participate in and urge on the Republican movement from its inception. Mr. Seward was an adroit and skilful party tactician, familiar with the tricks and contrivances in which his *fidus Achates* indulged to carry an election; while Mr. Lincoln had no taste, inclination, or respect for such practices, and would not, to secure party success, intentionally, even in the most excited election, deceive or permit others to deceive those who trusted him. The minds of the two men ran in different channels, and when they came together on important questions, that of the President was the principal, and not, as represented in the address, the tributary.

Mr. Adams says:

> Mr. Lincoln could not fail soon to perceive the fact that whatever estimate he might put on his own natural judgment, he had to deal with a superior in native intellectual power, in extent of acquirement, in breadth of philosophic experience, and in the force of moral discipline. On the other hand, Mr. Seward could not have been long blind to the deficiencies of the chief in these respects, however highly he might value his integrity of purpose, his shrewd capacity, and his generous and amiable disposition. . . . Thus it happened that Mr. Seward voluntarily dismissed forever the noblest dreams of an ambition he had the clearest right to indulge, in exchange for a more solid power to direct affairs for the benefit of the nation, through the name of another, who should yet appear in all later time to reap the honors due chiefly to his labors.

On no consideration would I detract one iota from the just merits of the late Secretary of State, with whom, though sometimes differing, I for eight years, under two Executives, enjoyed uninterruptedly pleasant social and official intercourse; nor am I willing to see the memory of the distinguished Chief Magistrate who served his country so faithfully and so well, and finally died in her cause, unjustly obscured, and his abilities and deeds belittled and wronged. As is elsewhere said in the address, "It is the duty of history, in dealing with all human action to do strict justice in discriminating be-

tween persons, and by no means to award to one honors that clearly belonged to another." Yet a more flagrant violation of "the duty of history" in that respect, a more erroneous and unjust discrimination, or a more unrighteous "award to one honors that clearly belong to another," is scarcely to be found in all history than in the assumption that Mr. Seward directed the affairs of the nation through the name of Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Adams omits to state in what particular Mr. Seward, aside from his own department, "exercised the more solid power to direct affairs for the benefit of the nation" of which Mr. Lincoln was "in all later time to receive "the honors." It was not in the management of the finances and establishing and maintaining the credit of the Government through a wasting war. I am not aware that he ever made a suggestion, proposed a measure, or in any way attempted to interfere with or direct the affairs of the Treasury Department. There was an intimacy between him and the War Department, but I do not remember that he proposed or directed the conduct of a single campaign, or originated any military or army movement, save some unfortunate and irregular proceedings early in the administration, when he took upon himself, as Secretary of State, to perform secretly and improperly the duties of Secretary of War without the knowledge of that officer. On one or two occasions when he attempted, in total disregard of good government and correct administration, to intermeddle with naval matters, the proceedings were, as with the War Department, disapproved as irregular, improper, and reprehensible. In the administration and operations of the Navy Department he had no part; not a single naval expedition was undertaken on his recommendation, and the most important ones were in progress without his knowledge and before he was informed of them. In the affairs and management of the other three departments he participated no more than in those mentioned, or than did other members of the Cabinet. The conduct of foreign affairs was, of course, intrusted to him under the supervision and control of the President, who directed the governmental policy, and sometimes overruled, modified, and improved the despatches which the Secretary had with great industry prepared. Mr. Seward held a ready and prolific pen, and had a mind fertile in expedients, but his judgments and conclusions were not always so sound and reliable as to pass without revision and Executive emendations and approval. Measures and important movements of each of the departments were generally, but not always, submitted to the Cabinet. The President was invariably consulted, but the Secretary of State stood in this respect like his colleagues, and his opinion and judgment, like theirs, were taken as were the others for what, in the estimation of Mr. Lincoln, they were worth. The policy of the President and the course of administration were based on substantial principles and convictions to which he firmly adhered. Mr. Seward relied less on fixed principle than expedients, and trusted to dexterity and skill rather than the rightfulness of a cause to carry him through emergencies.

Gideon Welles.

RABBI SIMEON'S PARABLE.

I.

AND it came to pass as the sun waxed hot,
And crowds in the synagogue came and went,
That under an oak they pitched his tent,
And the Rabbi sat and taught.

II.

And ever and oft as his eyes would stray
Beyond the circle that girt him round,
On Lebanon's slopes they rested—crowned
With its silvery crown alway;

MR. LINCOLN AND MR. SEWARD.

Remarks upon the Memorial Address of Charles Francis Adams on the late William H. Seward.

SECOND PAPER

THE construction of Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet was, with perhaps one exception, his own work. He would have been glad to call into his council a statesman from the South of marked ability and influence, but there were difficulties which prevented. The gentlemen whom he finally selected had no previous intimacy, personal or political, nor were there antagonisms to prevent harmony and concerted action. Between Seward and Chase there was imputed rivalry, and until within two days of the inauguration the opposition of the friends of the former to placing Mr. Chase in the Treasury was active and persistent. Each of these gentlemen had high aspirations. Each had been the chief Executive of his State. Each had represented his State in the Senate, and each had a distinct party position, and, to some extent, a personal following, which made the competition interesting. Mr. Seward was a Republican with centralizing tendencies, and had been prominent in the once powerful Whig organization which had fallen into decay. Mr. Chase was a federal Republican, favorable to State rights, not attached to, or strictly identified with, either of the old party organizations, but had been for years a conspicuous leader in the anti-slavery movement which was rising on the ruins of the Whig party. Their colleagues, aware of these differences and rivalries, were indifferent to them, and arrayed themselves under the banners of neither. It would be invidious to attempt to institute a comparison between these two gentlemen thus situated and associated; but the "Memorial Address" of Mr. Adams places Mr. Seward in the front rank of the anti-slavery movement—a "veteran reformer"—when, in fact, he had been one of the prominent members of a very different party, which, like the Democratic organization, carefully abstained from connection with that movement, while Mr. Chase was for years a prominent anti-slavery champion—openly, boldly, and irrespective of all other parties or organizations, its active and efficient advocate. In the appointment of these two men, Mr. Lincoln, who adopted the policy of Washington in bringing men of opposing principles into his Cabinet, provided they harmonized in measures of administration, reversed the original arrangement by giving to Seward, a Republican centralist, the post of Jefferson, a State rights federal Republican, and the Treasury to Chase, a federal Republican, the post which Washington assigned to Hamilton, a centralist.

Mr. Seward entered upon his duties with the impression, undoubtedly, which Mr. Adams seems to have imbibed, that he was to be *de facto* President, and, as the premier in the British Government, to "direct the affairs of the nation in the name of another." The consequences were that confusion and derangement prevailed to some extent at the commencement by reason of the mental activity, assumptions, and meddlesome intrusions of the Secretary of State in the duties and affairs of others, which were, if not disorganizing, certainly not good administration. Confidence and mutual frankness on public affairs and matters pertaining to the Government, particularly on what related to present and threatened disturbances, existed among all the members except Mr. Seward, who had, or affected, a certain mysterious knowledge which he was not prepared to impart. This was accepted as a probable necessity by his associates, for he had been in a position to ascertain facts which it was intimated he could not perhaps well disclose. It early became apparent, however, that the Secretary of State had ideas and notions of his own position and that of his colleagues, as well as of the character and attitude of the President, that others could not recognize. Secretiveness, subtle expedients, and mysterious man-

agement, which limited the knowledge of certain important transactions to the State Department, but of which the President was in some degree and from time to time partially informed, were the initiative Albany method of executive government. For several weeks after the inauguration no stated Cabinet meetings were held, though the members were frequently assembled in council—sometimes only a part; but whenever convened, it was by special notice from the Secretary of State. This irregular practice was after some weeks corrected, and stated meetings on Tuesdays and Fridays were ordered, against the remonstrance of Secretary Seward, who thought stated meetings caused unnecessary interruptions of business, and that often only a part of the members, such as were specially interested in the subjects under consideration, need be called to meet him and the President. It is mentioned in the "Memorial Address" that "Mr. Seward himself came into the State Department with no acquaintance with the forms of business other than that obtained incidentally through his services in the Senate." This was soon obvious to the whole council, who were much annoyed for a time in consequence, and until in a measure corrected, by this want of proper system and that correct administration which is essential to intelligent unity in the Government. Under evident misapprehension of his own powers and duties, and of what belonged to others, the Secretary of State undertook too much, found himself embarrassed by promises and assurances inconsiderately given; and with no clear and well-defined policy, but with faith in expedients, on which, rather than substantial principles, he relied, there were for a brief period some singular proceedings. President Lincoln bore with these things patiently, though the omens abroad were portentous. Incidents and occurrences which actually took place will best illustrate the condition of affairs, the men, and their relative positions in administering the government.

Within a month after the advent of Mr. Lincoln and the organization of his Cabinet, the Secretary of State exhibited his executive and administrative talent by preparing and sending out an irregular military expedition for the relief of Fort Pickens, without consulting the Secretary of War and without his knowledge. There is not in the archives and history of the Government a record of such mischievous maladministration, when all the circumstances are considered, as this secret scheme of the Secretary of State to send, without consulting the War Department or the General-in-Chief, a military expedition to Pickens, which had already been relieved. Military and naval appropriations were not at his disposal, but he assumed their expenditure. Officers and men of both the War and Navy Departments were surreptitiously, and without the knowledge of either the Secretary of War or Secretary of the Navy, withdrawn from legitimate duty; the funds and means provided for their respective departments by Congress, and legally under their control, for which they, and not the Secretary of State, were responsible, and which were destined by them and the Government for different objects, were secretly abstracted and diverted to purposes of which neither of them, nor any member of the Cabinet, was informed. The result of this strange misgovernment was confusion, disorganization, and demoralization; the records of the War and Navy Departments were made unreliable and apparently false; officers were away from their assigned duty; funds were misapplied; important movements were paralyzed and defeated; the course of the Administration was interrupted and incomprehensible, and it was accused of weakness and mismanagement. No satisfactory solution was ever given or attempted for this erratic and intrusive proceeding, other than rumors or charges that the Secretary of State had given assurances in regard to Fort Sumter that were unauthorized, and which could in no other way be carried out.

The condition of Fort Sumter and the necessity of measures for its relief were the first matters pressed upon the President, even before his Cabinet was organized. In his inaugural address he had said, "The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government." This was his policy; but the Secretary of State, who had different views, opposed sending reinforcements to Sumter, and in his opposition he was sustained by General Scott, to whom the subject was referred as a military ques

tion. General Scott gave his "hearty coöperation" to Mr. Seward, and reported against sending supplies. All the Cabinet, except Mr. Blair, acquiesced in the military recommendation; but the President, after repeated discussions, rejected the advice of Mr. Seward and adhered to his own original policy. The decision was a great disappointment to the Secretary of State. It was subsequently alleged, and has never been denied, that he had promised the rebels that Sumter should be evacuated. The President was not a party to any such assurance, knew not of it, and never gave it his sanction. Here, at the very commencement of the Administration, the two minds were in direct antagonism on a subject of momentous national interest. The President, who is represented as "having been selected partly on account of the absence of positive qualities," with a "mind not opened to the nature of the crisis," as subordinate and deficient in "native intellectual power," had a policy of his own in which he persisted, though opposed by the Secretary of State, aided by the General-in-Chief and the acquiescence of all but one of the Cabinet. His countrymen were with him and his views, not with the Secretary of State.

One evening in the latter part of the month of March there was a small gathering at the Executive Mansion while the Sumter question was still pending. The members of the Cabinet were soon individually and quietly invited to the council chamber, where, as soon as assembled, the President informed them he had just been advised by General Scott that it was expedient to evacuate Fort Pickens as well as Fort Sumter, which last was assumed at military headquarters to be a determined fact in conformity with the views of Secretary Seward and the General-in-Chief. This astounding announcement was the more surprising from the fact that the Navy Department had, about a fortnight previously, on the 12th of March, on the special application of General Scott, sent a steamer to the squadron off Pensacola with orders to land Captain Vogdes and his command, and thus reinforce Pickens. No word had been received from the fort, or from any quarter, that rendered necessary or even expedient this unaccountable change of military operations. A brief silence followed the announcement of the amazing recommendation of General Scott, when Mr. Blair, who had been much annoyed by the vacillating course of the General-in-Chief in regard to Sumter, remarked, looking earnestly at Mr. Seward, that it was evident the old General was playing politician in regard to both Sumter and Pickens; for it was not possible, if there was a defence, for the rebels to take Pickens; and the Administration would not be justified if it listened to his advice and evacuated either. Very soon thereafter, I think at the next Cabinet meeting, the President announced his decision that supplies should be sent to Sumter, and issued confidential orders to that effect. All were gratified with this decision except Mr. Seward, who still remonstrated, but preparations were immediately commenced to fit out an expedition to forward supplies. To the surprise of the Administration, information of the confidential order to reinforce Sumter was promptly sent to Charleston. It was subsequently ascertained that this telegram was sent by Mr. Harvey, a newspaper correspondent, who was intimate at the State Department. Mr. Harvey himself was soon after appointed Minister to Portugal.

It was on the 28th of March that the President informed the Cabinet of his determination to relieve the garrison in Sumter. On the following day, the 29th of March, Mr. Seward instituted his secret military expedition, without consulting the Secretary of War or General Scott. Until this time there had been "hearty coöperation" between them, but on the 29th Mr. Seward took Montgomery C. Meigs, then a captain of engineers, to the President, saying "he thought the President ought to see some of the younger officers, and not consult only with men who, if the war broke out, could not mount a horse," as General Scott could not. The General had from some cause or influence during the winter abandoned his original Jacksonian recommendation to President Buchanan that the forts in the South should be occupied and strengthened. He now advised President Lincoln to a different policy, and that Sumter and Pickens should be evacuated. Two days before the inauguration he so far yielded to the secession movement as to propose in a

private letter, as a last alternative, permitting "the wayward sisters to go in peace." The unanimous rejection of his proposition to evacuate Pickens, and the decision to reinforce Sumter, weakened the influence of General Scott and changed Mr. Seward's tactics. Captain Meigs was substituted as military adviser of the Secretary of State and manager of details in his secret military operations. This method of taking subordinates into the confidence of the Secretary of State, ignoring the whole Cabinet, and of administering the different departments of the Government, was never before practised, and will at no time bear very close inspection.

The President, in the legitimate discharge of his functions as the chief executive officer of the Government, directed that supplies should be sent to Sumter, and his confidential executive orders to that effect became an absorbing administration measure. Military preparations were made, and a squadron was promptly fitted out by the Navy Department within one week from the date of the Executive order to coöperate with the military, and instructions, sanctioned and approved by the President, were given to Captain Mercer, of the steam frigate Powhatan, to command the squadron and proceed off Charleston harbor. The other vessels were directed to report to him on the 11th of April, ten miles due east from Charleston lighthouse. But the whole plan and arrangement were defeated. Not only were the rebels advised of the confidential movements of the Administration by Harvey, but at the moment of sailing the expedition was deprived of its commander and flagship. Captain Mercer was displaced from the command, and the entire squadron, when it arrived at the place of rendezvous, was destitute of a naval commander, flagship, and instructions. The Powhatan, with boats, supplies, and men destined for Sumter, had been withdrawn from the service to which she was especially ordered, and sent, without naval orders or record, under a different and junior commander, on a secret and useless mission to Pensacola, by the Secretary of State. None of these orders emanated from, passed through, or were known to the Navy or War Department. The whole proceeding, in all its parts, was irregular, disorganizing, bad administration, and deficient in executive ability. The President, who, without giving the subject much consideration, had assented to the scheme of the Secretary of State to reinforce Pickens, was not aware that the flagship of the squadron to Charleston had been detached and its commander superseded until the evening of the 6th of April, on which day the Powhatan sailed under a different officer for a distant destination, carrying off supplies, munitions, and boats which the Navy Department had ordered for Sumter. I was not made acquainted with this secret proceeding until the Powhatan sailed, when I immediately informed the President. So soon as aware of the fact, he directed Mr. Seward, although it was then midnight, to telegraph forthwith and countermand the orders which detached that vessel, to reinstate Mercer, and in no way to interfere with the arrangements of the Secretary of the Navy. Mr. Seward remonstrated, claimed that the Powhatan was essential to reinforce Pickens, but the President was decided. A telegram was sent by Mr. Seward in his own name to New York, and a fast boat despatched from the Navy Yard, but nothing was accomplished. The Sumter expedition sailed without a naval commander, the squadron had no head, and the Powhatan, one of the three naval vessels on the Atlantic coast on which the Government relied in that "perilous emergency," with her large crew and armament, was sent to the Gulf, where she was not wanted, and where almost the whole home squadron was concentrated. It was on the night of the 6th of April that the Powhatan sailed for Pickens. On the next day Mr. Seward wrote to Judge Campbell, a leading secessionist on the Supreme bench: "Faith as to Sumter fully kept. Wait and see."

In these proceedings the administration and executive management of the President and Secretary of State, respectively, may be seen. The merits, sincerity, and policy of each are disclosed, and from them a more correct estimate may be formed of their ability, respective fitness, and peculiar qualities to discharge the duties of chief magistrate, than from the partial and prejudiced assertions of interested partisans.

I have made mention of only certain general measures of administration in re-

gard to the relief of Sumter, but it may be said in passing that there is an unwritten history of the transaction—of the changes on the part of General Scott; of the singular notice of Major Anderson to Mr. Buchanan on the morning of the 4th of March, an hour or two before the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln; of the preparations and non-preparations for defence, and other planning—which is yet to be analyzed and developed, but would be inappropriate in this place.

The following letter from ex-Postmaster-General Blair, one of the surviving members of the first Cabinet of Mr. Lincoln, corroborative of the foregoing statement, and illustrative of the character and course of the late Secretary of State in other respects, will be read with interest:

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1873.

MY DEAR MR. WELLES: I duly received yours of the 14th. You will have seen ere this that I have anticipated your advice, and made a statement in reply to Mr. Adams on the relations of Mr. Lincoln and Seward. I know that a fuller statement would be read with interest, but I prefer to leave that to you. I am tempted, however, to contribute a short chapter to your exposition, and to illustrate Mr. Seward's character by giving an account of his intrigue to surrender the forts, and allow secession to take its course, and his sudden change of policy when he found that Mr. Lincoln would resist secession.

General Scott was his great card at the outset. Lincoln, having been a Whig, and a supporter of Scott for the Presidency, had persuaded himself in the canvass that the old General was a great military man; and the General, being really patriotic, and having learned from General Jackson how to deal with secession, would have given good advice, if, unfortunately, he had not fallen into Mr. Adams's error in regarding Mr. Seward as the head of the government, and for this reason surrendered his own better judgment to that of Mr. Seward. This is shown by the fact that he had advised Mr. Buchanan to reinforce the forts. But in deference to Mr. Seward he changed all this, gave up his own opinions, and said, "Let the wayward sisters go in peace,' and actually advised the surrender of Fort Pickens at Pensacola as well as Fort Sumter at Charleston!

I never shall forget the President's excitement when, after a Cabinet dinner at the White House, he called the Cabinet into a separate room, and informed us that General Scott had told him *it would be necessary to evacuate Fort Pickens as well as Fort Sumter.* It was while the question of the surrender of Fort Sumter was undecided, but at a time when it was believed the fort would be surrendered, and after the way had been prepared for it by statements in the press that the fort was untenable. A very oppressive silence succeeded the President's statement of what General Scott had said. At length it was said this advice of the General's was enough of itself to show that he was playing politician and not general as respects Fort Sumter, as well as with respect to Fort Pickens, for there was no reason to believe that Fort Pickens could be taken from us.

Mr. Seward had overshot the mark this time. The Cabinet generally had been convinced that Fort Sumter was untenable, and acquiesced in its surrender, submitting to the inevitable. But there was no apprehension felt about Fort Pickens. The fort was well supplied, and was actually impregnable while we commanded the sea, and we then had a large naval force there. Hence, when the General said we must give up this fort too, the President's confidence in him was staggered, and from that moment I have always thought his power with the President waned.

When Mr. Seward saw that his policy of meeting "exaction with concession" and "violence with peace," announced in his speech of January 12, 1861, had failed, and that the President would not agree to surrender the forts, as Mr. Seward had induced General Scott to recommend him to do, he immediately telegraphed Governor Pickens, by the hands of Mr. Harvey, his Portuguese minister, that an attempt was to be made to reinforce Sumter. General Anderson had made no preparations to defend it, but left his barracks standing, to be fired at the first shot, instead of pulling them down and taking to his casemates, as he certainly would have done if he had not been *authoritatively told that the fort was to be evacuated as soon as the small supply of provisions on hand had been consumed.* But for this negligence, *for which he was never chided,* the fort was impregnable, as events proved, for we could never take it from the Confederates. To make sure of defeating the relief, however, the Powhatan, on whose seamen and guns the success of this expedition wholly depended, was secretly detached, by an order surreptitiously obtained from the President, on the pretext of relieving Fort Pickens, which was in no danger, for the defence of which ample provision had already been made, and to whose relief the Powhatan was wholly unnecessary and in no way contributed.

Mr. Seward had two objects in detaching this vessel: 1st. It defeated the relief of Fort Sumter, which he was pledged to surrender, and the failure to relieve it would vindicate his judgment in advising against the attempt. 2d. Fort Pickens could be claimed as having been saved by an expedition conceived and carried into execution under his orders, and so, though he would by this movement abandon his method of meeting "exaction with concession" and "violence with peace," he would signalize his abandonment of his peace policy by such a success in administering the force policy, as to put himself *per saltum* at the head of his opponents, discomfited by the failure of their attempt at resistance. And accordingly, though the Powhatan did but sail to Pensacola and back again, it was heralded as a great achievement.

The result of this scheming was sad indeed. Our flag on Fort Sumter held Beauregard at Charleston. When it fell he marched into Virginia and precipitated secession there. If we

could have held Fort Sumter there never would have been a drop of blood shed. It was the coercion of Virginia into the Confederacy by Beauregard's army that made the war. General Jackson held nullification in check, and compelled the repeal of the South Carolina ordinance, simply by sending Scott, with one thousand men, to hold Fort Moultrie. Sumter was infinitely stronger, and the North was relatively as much stronger than the South in 1860 as Sumter was stronger than Moultrie in 1833. Fortunately, the country was not cursed in Jackson's day with a meddling Secretary of State, to invite secession by agreeing to yield to its exactions and disarm the force ordered for its suppression, which was all-sufficient for the purpose at the start—using, without stint, his patronage and power to palm off through the press the blundering intrigues which brought on a disastrous war as statesmanship, and holding on to place by abandoning any policy which stood in the way of it, or by adopting any which might be required to retain it. I may misjudge Mr. Seward, but if I do it is not because I have ever had the least unkind feeling toward him personally. He never gave me the slightest reason for personal ill-will to him. My opposition to him has always been political, and because I regarded him as a most unsafe public man. He was a kindly man in his social relations, and when I met him in his home and family I enjoyed his society and was interested in him and them, and had a warm and sympathetic feeling for all that pertained to his domestic life. In that sphere I think he was a good and pure man. There was a freshness and heartiness in his manner, and his conversation so abounded in humor, and there was such an endless flow in his spirits, that I always found his society attractive. It was only against the political man that my nature revolted. He was to me the personification of old Polonius's politician, who "by indirection found direction out." Nor is this version of his character the result merely of my own observation of his conduct, or derived from the reports of others who have been associated with him. I have seen much of him, and much of those who have associated long with him. But the familiar facts of his life, derived from these sources, accord exactly with the political philosophy I have heard him propound over and over again. No one has ever associated long with him who has not heard him recount by the hour his successful political strategy. I could fill a volume with his narratives of the tricks he has played, if I could recall the half part of what I have heard from him. He really thought that politics was but a game. I shall never forget how shocked I was at his telling me that he was the man who put Archy Dixon, the Whig Senator from Kentucky in 1854, up to moving the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, as an amendment to Douglas's first Kansas bill, and had himself forced the repeal by that movement, and had thus brought to life the Republican party. Dixon was to outherod Herod at the South, and he would outherod Herod at the North. He did not contemplate what followed. He did not believe in the reality of the passions he excited, because he felt none himself. He thought it all a harmless game for power.

Yours truly,

MONTGOMERY BLAIR.

The crowded incidents of the early days of Mr. Lincoln's Presidency, while the members of the Cabinet were new to each other, and their relative standing and authority apparently unsettled, the character of the Administration not yet defined, and the Government and country much demoralized, are deeply interesting, and some of them of a singular description. In his confiding nature the President doubtless trusted much to the Secretary of State.

On the evening of the 1st of April Mr. Nicolay, the private secretary of the President, brought me a package containing papers, instructions, and executive orders of a most extraordinary character. One of them directed me to detach Commodore Stringham, a patriotic officer who was on special duty in the Navy Department, where he was employed in confidential trusts, and send him to Pensacola. Commodore Pendergrast, who had just arrived at Hampton Roads from the West Indies with the Cumberland, was ordered to repair forthwith to Vera Cruz on account of alleged complications. On the Cumberland and the Powhatan the Navy Department was relying to coöperate with the military, for the protection of the Navy Yard at Norfolk in case of difficulty. All these orders relating to the navy were issued by the Secretary of State without consultation with the Secretary of the Navy or any Cabinet consultation whatever. But the most extraordinary and irregular if not illegal order in that remarkable package directed a reorganization of the Navy Department, and the establishment of a new bureau, in which I was commanded to place in the most confidential relations, where he should have knowledge of all the important transactions of the navy and Navy Department, Samuel Barron, a finished courtier and shrewd secessionist. On looking over these documents it was evident to me that the President had been the victim of misplaced confidence and was sadly imposed upon, or that he was as unfit for the office of chief executive as is represented in the "Memorial Address." I lost not a moment in waiting upon him, and reading to him these extraordinary papers. He promptly and emphatically disavowed them; said he had hurriedly and without

examination signed a large number of papers which had been brought to him by Secretary Seward for a very different purpose, and which he had supposed were merely formal; that he was not aware of their contents; had trusted entirely to Mr. Seward; and whom could he trust if not the Secretary of State? He requested me to return him the orders or treat them as nullities. The result was, no new bureau was organized without law; Barron was not taken into the confidence of the Navy Department, but soon deserted and was the first naval officer captured in the rebel service; Stringham never went to Pensacola nor Pendergrast again to Vera Cruz, nor was there any complication that required it.

It is stated that President Lincoln was "quite deficient in his acquaintance with the character and qualities of public men, or their aptitude for the positions to which he assigned them. Indeed, he never selected them solely by that standard." The authority for this statement is not given. It relates, apparently, chiefly to appointments abroad, and these appointments, for which the President is held responsible, were most of them made on the recommendation of Mr. Seward, to whose department they properly appertained, and who was vigilant and tenacious in dispensing the patronage of the State Department. On this point of selecting officials, or being consulted in regard to appointments which came within the purview of his department, no man was more sensitive than Mr. Seward, though himself not always regardful of what in this respect was due to others.

In March, 1861, while the Senate was in extra session, differences existed between the Secretary of State and the Senators from New York relative to the local appointments in that State. These differences resulted in a conference at the State Department, to which the President was specially invited, and consented with some reluctance to be present. It was an evening consultation, and he thought proper to invite me to accompany him. The President, Secretary Seward, and Senators King and Harris were the only persons besides myself in attendance. Before taking up the list of names the President said he would relieve them of any difference in regard to the most important office, that of Collector, by appointing on his own responsibility and from personal knowledge Hiram Barney, who had his confidence and was a man of integrity. There was but a single civil appointment, that of Navy Agent, connected with the Navy Department to be made. No disagreement existed concerning that, which was soon disposed of, when Mr. Seward remarked it would be unnecessary to detain me longer, but the President and the Senators desired me to remain. It is not necessary to go into the particulars of that conference, which seemed to cover most of the important appointments in the city and State of New York. After listening to the disposition of some collectorships and other offices in which there was an approximation to agreement, there was an intimation by Mr. Seward that he wished the list which he had made out, and which was somewhat extended, might be completed and the nominations sent forthwith to the Senate. I inquired if the Secretary of the Treasury and Attorney General had been consulted, and concurred in the selection. Mr. Seward said they had not; that it was unnecessary; that these were New York appointments, and he and the Senators knew better than any others what was best for the party and the Administration in that State. I remarked that Cabinet officers were responsible for the proper administration of their respective departments; that subordinates should have their confidence, and if changes were to be made of the incumbents, the new selections should be by them or with their concurrence; that to fill the offices under them with untried men whom they did not know, and without their knowledge, appeared to me improper and would be likely to cause difficulties. Mr. Seward dissented, and claimed that he knew what was best for the Administration in New York; that there were personal and party matters to be considered, which neither Mr. Chase nor Mr. Bates could understand so well as himself. I disclaimed any intention to meddle with New York parties or New York controversies; but besides courtesies which it would be well always to observe, I insisted as a sound principle and correct rule of action that the heads of departments should, if they did not select, at least be consulted in regard to the appointments of their subordinates. The President said I was

right; that to fill the New York appointments as Mr. Seward wished, without consulting the Secretary of the Treasury, and others directly interested, would, he was convinced, not be satisfactory. He was willing to hear any remarks or suggestions relative to candidates, to take their recommendations; but it must be distinctly understood that there would be nothing conclusive until he advised with the heads of the departments interested. With this the meeting soon and somewhat abruptly terminated.

Mr. Thurlow Weed has related and published more than once what he deems a creditable proceeding, which exemplifies the Albany practice of making appointments, and the method of discharging the executive functions with which he was familiar. He was going, he says, on a brief errand to Washington early in the Administration, when he was requested by some of his party intimates to get a snug place for a naturalized Englishman who had for years been a willing runner, or whipper-in, for the Whigs of New York city, but who now wished to go home and spend his last days in a comfortable place in England. The request was cheerfully assented to, and Mr. Weed on the morning of his arrival, while at breakfast with the Secretary of State, communicated the wishes of their party friends, and was assured the solicited appointment should be made. Immediately, without inquiry or investigation, and while they were at breakfast, the Secretary, with his accustomed promptness, ordered the removal of the consul at Bristol and the appointment of the party instrument in his place. When Weed called at the State Department for the commission, Mr. Hunter, the old chief clerk, on delivering the document expressed his regret at the change. The consul whom you remove, said Mr. Hunter, is one of the most correct and efficient officers in the consular service, as was his father before him. That father was the open, steadfast, and true friend of our country in the war of independence. General Washington when President, in grateful remembrance of the sympathy and friendship of this English gentleman, appointed him consul at Bristol; and on his death, General Jackson appointed the son, whom you now remove without fault or complaint after years of faithful service. It makes me sad, said the old clerk. Weed acknowledged he was ashamed. His sensibilities were touched for the man; there was no thought for the welfare of the government. He declined to take the commission, and the removed consul was reinstated without ever knowing he had been displaced. Mr. Weed assumes and is entitled to the credit of not finally consummating a wrong after he learned the facts, though he did not inquire into the case, nor did the State Department before ordering the removal.

The "Memorial Address" declares that "no experiment so rash has ever been made as that of elevating to the head of affairs a man with so little previous preparation for his task as Mr. Lincoln. If this be true of him in regard to the course of domestic administration, with which he might be supposed partially familiar, it is eminently so in respect to the foreign relations of which he knew absolutely nothing."

No greater mistake or misrepresentation could be made. Men vastly inferior to Mr. Lincoln, less qualified and less able, have been elected President; and his general knowledge of our "foreign relations," if not as minute in routine and current details as that of members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, was more enlarged and comprehensive than that of many in those positions. Some of our countrymen, who live and die in retirement without ever holding office, give attention to those subjects, and are more capable of discharging the duties, and would represent the Government abroad with more ability than the persons selected. Without specifying particulars on these matters, I may mention that this man, who is represented as so totally ignorant and unfit, and so destitute of experience, and who it is said "absolutely knew nothing" concerning them, showed intelligence, sound judgment, and correct views at the very commencement of the administration, on a most interesting occasion, above the Secretary of State, who was, by the standard of Mr. Adams, greatly his superior. In an important despatch of the Secretary of State to Mr. Adams, who was then our Minister at London, Mr. Lincoln took the document, which he considered in some respects exceptional, criticised, modified, and with his own hand expurgated, corrected, and

improved it, and changed its character. This paper related to the recognition of belligerent rights, was addressed to Mr. Adams, and is probably now on the files of the State Department in its original form, with the corrections and improvements of the President. Mr. Adams was doubtless unaware that the President, who, he says, "absolutely knew nothing" of our foreign relations, was substantially the author of the instructions to himself, and laid down the chart by which he was to be guided in a most important matter of national concernment. The President overruled and set aside some of the elaborate and important, but in his view objectionable, portions of the despatch of Mr. Seward. These facts are known beyond the Cabinet circle, and are consequently no secret. There were other marked cases of intelligent supervision of our foreign affairs and their management by the President in the final summing up on important questions, which overthrow the statements of Mr. Adams, who has an utterly false conception of the relative position, ability, and character of the two men of whom he speaks. To the Secretary of State, whose special duty it was to investigate and report upon international subjects, and prepare instructions to the representatives of the Government abroad, the President gave the same, perhaps closer attention than to the Secretary of the Navy, who issued instructions and orders to the commanders of squadrons and officers on special duty. In no respect was the Secretary of State on a different footing in administering the Government from other heads of departments. He was more constant and unwearied than others in his attention to and attendance upon the President, made it a point to always accompany him in his visits to the army or wherever he appeared in public, and was personally very devoted to him, but never exercised higher executive authority or had "the more solid power to direct affairs for the benefit of the nation" than his associates. There were in the foreign policy of the Government during Mr. Lincoln's administration fewer and less perplexing questions, less serious complications than under several of our previous Presidents. But the domestic administration from the commencement to its close was one of unprecedented labor and responsibility, requiring energy, vigilance, executive and administrative ability, such as had never before devolved on the Chief Magistrate or the Government.

It is admitted by Mr. Adams that, while wanting in the qualities of President, and while "no experiment so rash has ever been made as that of elevating to the head of affairs a man with so little previous preparation for his task as Mr. Lincoln," "he afterwards proved himself before the world a pure, brave, honest man, faithful to his arduous work." Nothing more. It is still left to be inferred that he was incompetent and without ability to discharge the duties of his position, except under the direction of one of his subordinates who had really less to do than others in the domestic administration of the Government. It does not occur to Mr. Adams that the people formed a more correct estimate of Mr. Lincoln's capacity than himself. He gives no credit to President Lincoln for far-seeing sagacity, in which he excelled most men of his time; for knowledge of the structure of the Government and information on public affairs, which he had studied with diligence and passionate fondness; for arduous and successful labors, though holding no office, endowed with no wealth, and aided by no metropolitan funds, in his great struggle for constitutional freedom; for executive and administrative ability, for sound judgment, intellectual capacity, mental power, and practical knowledge, which enabled him to stand at the helm and guide the Government through storms and dangers such as no country ever experienced. In all these qualities the impression is conveyed that this remarkable man was deficient, but that they were possessed by the Secretary of State, who was "not blind to the deficiencies of his chief." Indeed, the whole language, tone, tenor, sentiment, and intent of the address are to elevate Mr. Seward and depreciate Mr. Lincoln; to award to the Secretary honors that clearly belong to the President; to make it appear that the subordinate controlled and directed the principal; that the Secretary of State was *de facto* President, and the President himself a mere *locum tenens*, incompetent for the place from the want of "experience" and "previous preparation." Mr. Seward had influence in the Administration, but not control. His mental activity,

the "marvellous fertility of his pen," his proneness to exercise authority and to make himself conspicuous on every important subject and occasion, imposed on admiring and willing friends, who, like Mr. Adams, persuaded themselves that one so active and prominent must be the moving and directing spirit of the Administration. It would be difficult, however, for his most partial friends to specify any financial, military, naval, territorial, or general measure of administration which had its origin with or was directed by the Secretary of State, while the President suggested some and directed all. Mr. Seward could adapt himself to or adopt and appropriate the views of others with wonderful facility, could second their propositions, and support them with a zeal and earnestness which made them seem his own.

Mr. Adams says he knows that in order to cut up by the roots the possibility of misunderstanding or rivalry between the President and Secretary of State, "Mr. Seward deliberately came to the conclusion to stifle every sensation left him of aspiration in the future, by establishing a distinct understanding with the President on that subject." "Thus it happened that Mr. Seward voluntarily dismissed forever the noblest dreams of an ambition he had the clearest right to indulge, in exchange for a more solid power to direct affairs for the benefit of the nation through the name of another, who should yet appear in all later time to reap the honors due chiefly to his labors."

That Mr. Seward signified to the President he should not be a competitor with him for the office of Chief Magistrate in 1864 is not improbable, and but for the disparagement so ungenerously as well as unjustly thrown upon the President, who according to the "Memorial Address" was "in all later times to reap the honors due chiefly to Mr. Seward's labors," the latter should have the unrestricted credit of patriotic self-abnegation. But the truth must not be suppressed or perverted, and there are, aside from the act of declination but connected with it, certain facts and circumstances which are essential to a right understanding of the case, and which, if the subject be alluded to, truth requires should not be omitted.

In December, 1862, the dissatisfaction which existed in Congress and the country against the imputed meddlesome interference and alleged mismanagement of the Secretary of State, and his supposed influence over the Executive, was such that a very general desire was expressed that he should leave the Cabinet and retire from the Administration. To some extent he had unwittingly and unintentionally contributed to the prevailing discontent by persistent and ostentatious exhibition of himself in public with the President when he visited the army, and indeed on every possible occasion, outside of the State Department. His *claqueurs* and supporters busied themselves in representing that Mr. Seward was *de facto* President, and the "Memorial Address" falls into the same error by declaring he was directing affairs. Mr. Seward gave encouragement to these representations. They gratified his vanity and that of his supporters, but did not strengthen and fortify him in Congress or with the public, as he and his friends anticipated would be the case, but really weakened him, and for a time were harmful to the President, towards whom the country was otherwise well inclined. Military reverses always weaken an administration. The people, however, are tolerant of the mistakes of their chief magistrate, and forbearing towards his honest errors, but are exacting and often intolerant towards subordinates or reputed favorites. Under national reverses they were lenient towards the President, and whatever was wrong they charged, sometimes improperly, on the secretaries, particularly the one who assumed the "more solid power to direct affairs," and whom they held accountable, not entirely without reason, for certain executive indiscretions and for national misfortunes.

When Congress convened in December the sentiment or prejudice against Mr. Seward was deep and severe, but he seemed not cognizant of it, nor was the President himself aware of its full extent. He could not have been wholly ignorant of the fact that there was a growing dislike of the Secretary of State, and that he was opposed by many friends of the Administration as well as opponents; but he knew that others of the Cabinet were improperly censured and abused, and that he as well as they were in some cases unjustly assailed. No one, however, had warn-

ed either of the extreme disfavor with which almost the whole community in those days viewed Mr. Seward—their want of confidence in his sincerity and judgment, and their belief that his intimacy and influence with the President were pernicious. This erroneous, or, more properly speaking, exaggerated impression of the influence and power of the Secretary of State which the partisans of Mr. Seward had inculcated, in the mistaken belief that it would increase his strength to the same extent that it injured the President—a mistake into which Mr. Adams appears to have fallen—carried with it the idea that the President permitted himself to be persuaded and misled by his subordinate to do acts against his own better judgment. The assiduous attentions of the Secretary of State could scarcely fail to have some effect on the President, especially in minor matters, to which he could not always, in the overwhelming multiplicity of affairs, give that minute attention which he wished. Intimacy, companionship would unavoidably carry with it more or less influence, and in that view the Secretary had influence which he was forward to exhibit and not reluctant to exercise, sometimes unfortunately for the President and the country. It was notorious that the partisan friends of Mr. Seward were anxious to have it believed he was the power behind the President who controlled the action of the Government, and some of his own oracular sayings and doings tended to that belief.

A brief interchange of views among the members after Congress assembled led to the disclosure of great unanimity of opinion adverse to the Secretary of State, which resulted in a meeting of the Republican Senators on the 17th of December, at which resolutions in opposition to him and requesting that he should be dismissed were adopted with but one dissenting voice. A committee of nine Senators, embracing some of the ablest and most eminent men of that body, at the head of which was the venerable Judge Collamer of Vermont, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, was appointed, and instructed to wait upon the President and communicate to him the general conviction that the continuance of Mr. Seward in office would be injurious to the Administration and the country, and to make known to him a request on the part of the Senators assembled that the services of Mr. Seward should be dispensed with.

These extraordinary proceedings were immediately communicated to Secretary Seward, before the committee had waited upon the President, by Senator King of New York, the only gentleman who had opposed them. Mr. Seward promptly and properly tendered his resignation. It is not essential to enter into the details of that movement further than to say that Mr. Lincoln defeated it, and in doing so demonstrated to Senators and Cabinet executive ability, tact, and power such as Mr. Adams never knew that he possessed, and consequently fails to appreciate. Although surprised and grieved by what was done and what he learned, the President did not submit to Senatorial dictation, nor permit the Executive Department of the Government to be overborne or invaded. Mr. Seward was not dismissed, nor was his resignation accepted, nor did he wish it to be accepted. The attempt to drive him from the State Department really strengthened him in the position, but there is no doubt the movement had in some respects a beneficial effect in restraining the officiousness of Mr. Seward and in arousing Mr. Lincoln's attention to it. The scheming party management, which had been defeated first at Chicago and subsequently in the formation of the Cabinet, but which had adroitly undertaken to control and regulate the Administration, was by these Senatorial proceedings rebuked and again defeated. Some of the active Congressional friends who had favored the nomination of Mr. Seward at Chicago had become dissatisfied with him and his demonstrations, and were most forward in asking that he should not be permitted to longer discharge the duties of Secretary of State.

It was at this juncture, when he became conscious that he had no longer a party to sustain him—when he saw all the Senate, and, it may be added, about the whole of the representative body opposed to him—when there was not a single State, nor any party in any State, in his favor—that "Mr. Seward deliberately came to the conclusion to stifle every sensation left in him of aspiration in the future," and "dismiss forever the noblest dreams of ambition," not that he might be or was thereby able to "direct affairs,"

nor yet with the conviction that Abraham Lincoln "should reap the honors due chiefly to his labors," but because any idea of political preferment was to him utterly hopeless. It is an incontrovertible truth that he had the confidence and support of no party, and was wanting in that power which derives its strength from public opinion.

Perhaps no one occurrence better illustrates the executive and administrative course of Mr. Seward, than certain proceedings in relation to mails taken on captured vessels. Very little publicity was given to the subject at the time, though it was the cause of frequent and earnest discussion, and of a somewhat extensive and elaborate correspondence.

I received on the last day of October, 1862, a brief note from Mr. Seward, saying: "It is thought expedient that instructions be given to the blockading and naval officers, that in case of capture of merchant vessels suspected or proved to be vessels of the insurgents or contraband," the mails should "not be searched or opened, but be put as speedily as may be convenient on the way to their designated destinations." By whom it was "thought expedient" that such illegal "instructions" should be given, and an essential national right renounced in the midst of war when most needed, did not appear. The note, though characteristic, was of such a tenor that I gave it no attention whatever, except to say to Mr. Seward within a day or two, probably at our next meeting, that I had received it, that I disliked its tenor, and knew not its object, or whether it was private or official, but it could not be expected I would carry it into effect. He made a passing reply that he had great difficulty in keeping the peace and satisfying foreign demands, particularly the English, who were very exacting. There the matter rested, and I supposed was ended; but six months later he came to my house Saturday evening, the 11th of April, with a letter from Lord Lyons enclosing an extract from Mr. Archibald, the English Consul in New York, who had written his lordship that the mail bag of the Peterhoff, a captured vessel, was in the prize commissioner's office, "that the Court had directed the mail parcels should be opened in order to see what letters were enclosed relating to the cargo on board the ship, and requested that I would open the package and select such letters as appeared to me to relate to the cargo on board or to the consignee mentioned in the manifest, and to take charge of the residue, with a view of forwarding them to their destination." With this request the Consul refused to comply, and immediately informed Lord Lyons, who wrote Mr. Seward that "all these proceedings seem to me to be so contrary to the spirit of your letter to the Secretary of the Navy of the 31st of October, that I cannot help hoping you will send orders by telegraph to stop them."

I asked Mr. Seward if he had telegraphed or written as requested. He said he had not; it was not strictly within the province of the State Department; the Court would not be likely to be governed by anything from him on a subject of naval concern; he therefore wished me to send word to the Court to give up the mail. I assured him I was not prepared to send any such order; that I could not do it without a violation of law, and that the Judge knew his duty too well to regard such an order from him or me; that the mails were legally in the custody of the Court, and ought not to be given up without examination, for, in all probability, the best, and perhaps the only evidence that the Peterhoff was good prize, was to be found in the mail bag. It would be wrong toward the Government and unjust to the captors to part with this evidence.

He was greatly disturbed; said he was committed by his letter to me of the 31st of October, which had directed and virtually pledged the Government that the mails should be given up without search. I replied that he was not authorized to give any such direction or pledge; that it was contrary not only to usage but to international and statute law; that I had paid no attention to his note, which was irregular and improper, as well as illegal, subversive of usage, and an unauthorized abandonment of a national right, which would be most injurious to the navy and the country; that as regarded any personal humiliation in recalling or disavowing it, no one but myself was aware he had ever written such a note, and it had entirely passed from my mind. He answered that he had given Lord Lyons or some of the legation a copy of it, and it had been read and received as authority in Parliament. Our Govern-

ment would be holden to the promise he had made. But, said I, you could make no promise to override the law, or against law; the letter was not an executive order, an act of Congress, or a treaty stipulation. I regretted that it had been written, still more that it was published, for it was supercilious and improper on his part to undertake to instruct the Secretary of the Navy as he would a subordinate; that it was unfortunate such a note, unofficial and of no authority whatever, should have been made public. It was discourteous for him to address such a letter to me; disrespectful and wrong to have communicated such an unauthorized missive to the English legation; that they were not aware he was not empowered to instruct me or any of his colleagues; that this subject had never been a matter of Cabinet consultation, and was in no sense an administration measure. He left me at a late hour, and after a pretty earnest conversation, to see Lord Lyons. The Minister was unyielding, and the question was carried to the President, who frankly stated that the subject was new to him; that he was not familiar with maritime law or the law of prize. I turned his attention to our statutes, which were clear and explicit. The law of 1789, our earliest statute, says: "All papers, charter parties, bills of lading, passports, and other writings whatsoever found on board any ship or ships which shall be taken, shall be carefully preserved, and the originals sent to the courts of justice for maritime affairs," confirmed by the law of 1800, and subsequent enactments.

Eminent counsel were consulted, and authorities hunted up, but the whole array was against the unauthorized, illegal, and ill-considered note of the 31st of October. For days and weeks the subject was under consideration, and the more clear and unquestionable the case appeared, and the greater the embarrassment of Mr. Seward, the deeper were the President's sympathies for him and the stronger his wish to extricate the Secretary from a dilemma into which he had been apparently unwittingly seduced. The transaction was studiously withheld from Cabinet consultations. Mr. Seward had, it seemed, in a weak and unguarded moment, attempted to show to Mr. Stuart, of the British legation, his authority and power as Secretary of State; that he was virtually the premier and the controlling mind of the Government; that he could issue orders to his associates in the Cabinet as he would to subordinates, and regulate international questions by a mere dash of his pen, without regard to the President and Cabinet. But when the question came to a practical issue, and he was required to show his authority to make regulations for the navy, to set aside the laws of the country, to disregard international law and usage, his ill-timed letter and assumption of power came home with terrible effect. Law and usage and the practice of nations could not be overturned by a flippant note from the head of a department. Only an act of Congress or a treaty duly ratified could do what the Secretary of State, with all the experience and superior intelligence awarded him by Mr. Adams, attempted to do, in order to gratify a subordinate in the British legation, who had an object in view, and gained his point by seducing the Secretary, whose vanity was susceptible. When I asked if this renunciation of a right, which would impair the efficiency of the navy and operate injuriously to our national interests, was reciprocal, whether the British Government had consented, in case of war, to also abandon the right, Mr. Seward admitted they had come under no obligation to that effect, but he had no doubt they would. His principal justification, however, was the unfriendly feeling of Great Britain, which he declared was very hostile, and that it was his constant labor and duty to pacify and appease that government. This necessity, he said, had driven him to extraordinary concessions, and in promising the surrender of the mails without examination he had acted in the interest of peace. In other words, he had disregarded law, renounced an essential right at a critical period of the war without reciprocity, without an equivalent, without Cabinet consultation, and submitted and yielded to the illegal exactions of the English legation.

Senator Sumner, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, in whose superior intelligence and information on questions of international law President Lincoln had great confidence, and whom he often consulted on conflicting and troublesome subjects with foreign powers, became greatly interested in this question. He assured the President that the Secretary of the Navy was right, and the State

Department wrong. But Mr. Seward insisted that the British Government was sensitive, and if we opened and examined the mails they would avail themselves of the occasion to make war. This the President dreaded. I claimed that the best way to avert war was a fearless maintenance of our rights; that to renounce our rights from fear or threat would be humiliation and weakness. The point was one on which the President assumed the Secretary of State must be correctly informed, and, horrified with the idea of irritating Great Britain, which Mr. Seward insisted would be inevitable, and all his sympathies being with the Secretary, he thought it expedient to accede to Lord Lyons's demand, and surrender the Peterhoff mails.

A few days after the renunciation of our national right to placate England, Senator Sumner met Lord Lyons at the house of Tassara, the Spanish Minister, and expressed to him his regret that, taking advantage of the peculiar condition of our affairs, he should have made a demand on our Government which could not be yielded without national dishonor; that the subject of examining all letters and papers on prizes was well settled by the law of nations, and questions relating to mails on captured vessels were judicial rather than diplomatic. Lord Lyons disavowed ever having made a demand; said he was careful and guarded in all his transactions with Mr. Seward, and made it a point to reduce every question with him to writing. He authorized Mr. Sumner to examine his whole correspondence with the State Department; said he had of course been gratified with the voluntary renunciation by Mr. Seward of the right to search the mails; and when, contrary to the promise tendered by the Secretary of State, the mails were carried into court, he had called Mr. Seward's attention to his own letter of the 31st of October to the Secretary of the Navy abandoning the right, but he had exacted nothing, made no demand, and merely asked him to do as he had promised.

When Mr. Sumner on the following day reported this interview with the British Minister, the President was filled with astonishment, and said, in his emphatic manner, "I shall have to cut this knot."

Of what advantage to the Executive or the country was the greater experience of the Secretary of State in this instance? He had been twelve years in the Senate, and by a dash of the pen, in a note of six lines, he, against usage—against both national and international law—without the action of Congress——without consulting President or Cabinet—without the consent of the people or the approval of the Government—without a treaty with reciprocal advantages—without authority of any kind, assumed the power to relinquish and renounce an indispensable national right in naval captures. If the President, from friendship or sympathy, was influenced to shield or sustain the Secretary of State in his distressing embarrassment, it was under circumstances which will be rightly appreciated. It is one of many cases which exhibit the workings of the Administration—the "positive qualities" and real merits and course of action of the President and Secretary of State—the confiding nature of the former and the influence exercised by the latter; and from facts like these a judgment may be formed how far the country and posterity are likely to "award honors to Mr. Lincoln that clearly belong to Mr. Seward." Let neither be robbed of the honors he earned or of the just merits to which he is entitled.

It may be added that the Peterhoff was an advance steamer of a proposed line of packets, which were to convey mails and supplies, ostensibly to Matamoros, but with contingent destination for Texas. The whole scheme was deliberately planned to evade the blockade, and give the rebels free communication abroad through British mails via the Rio Grande; and the Secretary of State, flattered and seduced by the British legation, had given the parties immunity by his ill-advised letter renouncing the national right to search the mails. After the mails of the Peterhoff were given up, that vessel was released and restored to her owners for the want of sufficient evidence to condemn her, a heavy loss to the captors and to the Government; but the parties in the Matamoros line became involved in a legal controversy in the English courts after the war was over, when it was made evident that the vessel was good prize, and it is understood the evidence which would have insured her condemnation was in the mails that were surrendered.

GIDEON WELLES.

MR. LINCOLN AND MR. SEWARD.

Remarks upon the Memorial Address of Charles Francis Adams on the late William H. Seward.

THIRD PAPER

DIFFERENCES existed in the Cabinet and the country in 1861 on some of the measures and the course of policy which the Government should pursue toward the secessionists. The questions presented were in some respects novel and without precedent, as was the insurrection itself. Hostilities were precipitated within forty days of the inauguration, before the Administration was fully established in place, or had time to develop its policy. The assault on the flag at Charleston compelled immediate action. The proclamation promptly issued for seventy-five thousand volunteers also declared a blockade of the Southern ports. There was entire unanimity in the Cabinet on all points in the proclamation except that of a blockade, which was questioned as a doubtful and irregular proceeding; for the conflict, whether an insurrection or rebellion, was purely domestic—a civil war and not a foreign war; and it was thought the internal dissensions in our own territory should be confined within our own borders. A majority of the Cabinet, therefore, preferred an embargo or suspension of intercourse with that part of the country to a blockade, and maintained it to be the true policy of the Government to close the ports and interdict commerce with the insurgents until the rebellion was suppressed. It was claimed that a blockade was not a domestic but an international question—legitimate and proper as between two distinct nations, but that we could not properly blockade our own ports, though we might shut them up, prohibit traffic from abroad by law, and make its violation a criminal offence; that the very fact of a blockade of the whole rebel territory would raise them to the level of belligerents—a concession to the Confederate organization virtually admitting it to be a quasi government—giving that organization a position among nations that we would not and could not recognize or sanction, and which would inevitably lead to embarrassments. But the subject was in some of its aspects novel, and the Secretary of State, though sometimes rash, had not the bold and vigorous mind to assert and maintain a right principle if fraught with doubt and difficulty, provided there was an easier path. The blockade, he thought, opened up a way. The questions of blockade were well settled and clearly defined, the authority and precedents explicit; and he therefore preferred to adopt that course, shelter himself under those precedents, and apply international law to a strictly national and domestic controversy, rather than assert a measure and vindicate an important principle affecting national rights. Less was said in the confusion and proceedings which came like an avalanche at that critical moment upon the Administration, than at a later period. Two members of the Cabinet said they had bestowed very slight examination upon the subject, and as it related to foreign intercourse they deferred to the Secretary of State, who had given it special attention, and also cited authorities justifying an exclusion of commerce from national ports in the equitable form of blockade. President Lincoln inclined to that view, and when Mr. Seward asserted that one great object of the blockade instead of a closure of the ports was to avoid complications which would be likely to involve us in a foreign war, the question was decided. The President said we could not afford to have two wars on our hands at once, and a blockade was ordered. The authority and the right of the national Government to close ports within its jurisdiction was controverted by no one, though a blockade was. Mr. Seward himself, in his despatch of the 8th of June to Mr. Adams, said: "We claim to have a right to close the ports which have been seized by insurrectionists for the purpose of suppressing the attempted revolution, and no one could justly complain if we had done so decisively and peremptorily."

But the English Government, as soon as information was obtained of differences in the American Cabinet, made haste to force us to adhere to the blockade, which would be an acknowledgment of belligerent rights to the rebels, by indirectly admonishing us of its views and intentions in a debate promptly got up in Parliament for the purpose on the 27th of June, immediately on the receipt of Mr. Seward's despatch. Lord John Russell in that debate announced the interpolation of a new doctrine by the British Government into international law, by declaring to the feeble government of New Granada, "It is not competent for its government to close its ports that are *de facto* in possession of the insurgents."

The debate, ostensibly on the affairs of New Granada, was evidently and unmistakably intended as an admonition and menace to the United States, then engaged in suppressing insurrection. In a despatch of the 28th of June from our Minister in London, just twenty days after Mr. Seward's despatch of the 8th of June claiming our right to close the ports, Mr. Adams wrote the Secretary of State that in an interview with Lord John Russell, "His Lordship then said something about difficulties in New Granada, and the intelligence that the insurgents had undertaken to close several of their ports. But the law officers here told him that this could not be done as against foreign nations, excepting by the regular form of blockade. He did not know what we thought about it, but he had observed that some such plan was likely to be adopted at the coming session of Congress in regard to the ports of those whom we considered as insurgents." His lordship also on the 27th of June announced in Parliament that "the opinion of Her Majesty's Government after taking legal advice is, that it is perfectly competent for the government of a country in a state of tranquillity to say which ports shall be open to trade and which shall be closed; but in the event of insurrection or civil war in that country, it is not competent for its government to close its ports that are *de facto* in the hands of the insurgents, as that would be an invasion of international law with regard to blockade."

Congress when it convened in special session in July, a few days after this English menace, totally unmindful of "the opinion of Her Majesty's Government after taking legal advice," but under the counsel and deliberate conclusion of our wisest and ablest legislators and statesmen, and in total disregard of the policy of our own Secretary of State as well as of Her Majesty's Government, declined to commit itself to the blockade, and in explicit and emphatic language authorized, by the act of the 13th of July, a closure of the ports. Mr. Seward was constrained, under these circumstances and under the direction of President Lincoln, on the 21st of July, to tell Mr. Adams that "Since your conversation with Lord John Russell, the Congress of the United States has by law asserted the right of this Government to close the ports of this country which have been seized by the insurgents. The connecting by Lord John Russell of that measure when it was in prospect with what had taken place in regard to a law of New Granada, gives to the remarks which he made to you a significance that requires no especial illustration. The President fully agrees with Congress in the principle of the law which authorizes him to close the ports which have been seized by the insurgents, and he will put into execution and maintain it with all the means at his command, at the hazard of whatever consequences, whenever it shall appear that the safety of the nation requires it."

It is not expedient, perhaps, to follow up in its details a subject not particularly creditable to our diplomacy and to the maintenance of our national rights, further than to allude briefly to the historic facts. The brave words of the Secretary of State, uttered on the 21st of July, were not enforced. Mr. Adams, in a despatch of the 16th of August, says he took occasion to intimate to Lord John Russell that "he must not infer from my not having entered into discussion of the merits of the question, that I gave any assent to the position taken by him about the right of a government to close its own ports, when held by forcible possession of persons resisting its authority. On the contrary, I desired to reserve for my government the treatment of it as an open question whenever it should take any practical shape. In the mean time I had every reason to believe that it was the design of the President to persevere in the blockade," etc. His lordship declared in Parliament, however, that he considered the law of Con-

gress "as merely giving a discretionary power. But if carried into practice, he construed it as putting an end to the blockade." Under these threats our Government tamely submitted. The law of Congress was not carried into effect, our diplomacy was meek and yielding, and under British menace the blockade of our own ports, by our own ships, was continued.

On the 2d of September the Secretary of State, with some trepidation, informed the Minister that "no change of policy in regard to the blockade has been adopted"—a timid intimation of acquiescence in an insult and injury, to appease British arrogance; her ministry believing and asserting that an effective blockade of our extensive coast was impossible, but in no other way could commerce be interdicted. Our Government did not close the ports, but under the hint given by the English dictum to New Granada, it abstained from exercising the national authority, and was passive and submissive. In all this time, while treating the Confederates as belligerents, and their organization as a quasi government, the Secretary of State, with strange inconsistency, denounced their cruisers as pirates.

Not until the 9th of April, 1865, after Richmond had fallen, and only three days before the assassination of President Lincoln, was a proclamation issued, in pursuance of the act of Congress of the 13th of July, 1861, to close the ports of the Southern States. Until the war had virtually ceased, the law of Congress was not enforced. The British mandate to New Granada was tamely acquiesced in and obsequiously observed by the United States. Our ports were not closed, but blockaded, which eventuated, as was intended, in establishing throughout the war the English ports of Nassau, Bermuda, and Halifax as entrepots for illicit traffic with the rebels and resorts for rebel cruisers, to harass and destroy our commerce. It opened the English ports throughout the world to the Alabama, and rovers of her class, which swept our merchant ships from the ocean for the benefit of England.

On the subject of a blockade of our own ports by our own vessels, Mr. Seward had undoubtedly, for good or for evil, influence with the President which outweighed a majority of the Cabinet and Congress. The subject was new to him when his decision was given, and the blockade being made effective by the navy, he did not care to reopen a disturbing question, though his views became modified, and ultimately the ports were closed, notwithstanding the English dictum to New Granada.

The management of our foreign affairs, and the maintenance of our rights against the pretensions and menaces of the arrogant ministry of England, thus commenced, was continued, until intelligent Englishmen themselves were surprised if not disgusted with our subserviency. After the shameful renunciation of our right to send into the courts mails from captured vessels—a right recognized and established by the usage of nations, and made a duty by our own statutes—an eminent English publicist, Sir Vernon Hawksworth, amazed at our submissive and pusillanimous diplomacy, warned his government against proceeding too far in its demands, "for," said he, "*what we have most to fear is not that Americans will yield too little, but that we shall accept too much.*" A humiliating commentary on our diplomacy, by an English writer of no mean ability.

The relation of the circumstances attending the capture and release of the rebel emissaries, Mason and Slidell, is pregnant with error. The excitement which accompanied the intelligence of the capture of these mischievous men was great, and had at one time a threatening aspect. The final disposition of the question, with the restoration of the prisoners to British authority, might well be mentioned as displaying the marked and in some respects perhaps happy trait of Mr. Seward in adapting himself to circumstances which he could not control. But Mr. Adams fails to bring out that shrewd diplomatic quality of Mr. Seward's mind, and strives to inculcate an impression that the Secretary of State stood alone; was wise, sagacious, reserved, and profound, when others were blind, precipitate, and weak; took upon himself "the whole weight of popular indignation," and, "like the Roman Curtius, who leaped into the abyss which could have been closed in no other way," he offered himself a sacrifice to secure the safety of the State. Mr. Seward should receive credit for the dexterous and skilful despatch which he prepared on his own change of position. It exhibits his readiness and peculiar tact and ability to extricate him

self from and to pass over difficulties. But in point of fact no man was more elated or jubilant over the capture of the emissaries than Mr. Seward, who for a time made no attempt to conceal his gratification and approval of the act of Wilkes. But while he and most of the Cabinet and country were hilarious, the President had doubts, misgivings, and regrets, which were increased after an interview with Senator Sumner, with whom he often—sometimes to the disgust and annoyance of Mr. Seward—advised on controverted or disputed international questions, and especially when there were differences between himself and the Secretary of State.

On the question of giving up the emissaries, Mr. Adams says: "When the time came for the assembly of the Cabinet, not a sign had been given by the President, or any of the members, favorable to concession. Mr. Seward, who had been charged with the official duty of furnishing the expected answer, assumed the responsibility of preparing his able argument, upon which a decision was made to surrender the men. Upon him would have rested the whole weight of popular indignation had it proved formidable. If I have been rightly informed, when read it met with few comments and less approbation. On the other hand, there was no resistance. Silence gave consent. It was the act of Mr. Seward, and his name was to be associated with it, whether for good or for evil."

The truth is, not only had the President expressed his doubts of the legality of the capture, and had them increased, while Mr. Seward was rejoicing over and approving of the proceeding, but Mr. Blair from the first had denounced the act as unauthorized, irregular, and illegal. Not being a special admirer of Wilkes, Mr. Blair recommended that Wilkes should be ordered to take the Iroquois and go with Mason and Slidell to England, and deliver them to the British government; for Palmerston and Russell would, he said, seize the occasion to make war. The prompt and voluntary disavowal of the act of Wilkes, and delivering over the prisoners, would have evinced our confidence in our own power, and been a manifestation of our indifference and contempt for the emissaries, and a rebuke to the alleged intrigues between the rebels and the English Cabinet. Mr Seward took a totally different view; scouted the idea of letting the prisoners go; said the British did not want them, and we could not think of delivering them up. While Mr. Blair did not go about at the time proclaiming his opinions on a subject which was under consideration, his dissent from the original views of the Secretary of State, and condemnation of the act of Wilkes, are notorious among those who were intimate with the transactions of the Government. The time for further withholding the facts, and permitting men like Mr. Adams to be misled, has gone by. The truth in relation to these and other matters, so long perverted and suppressed, should be known, and history set right.

Nearly every member of the Administration, like Mr. Seward, rejoiced in the capture of these mischievous men. No one coincided with Mr. Blair in his suggestion to compel Wilkes to return them to the custody of Great Britain, however wise it may have been in view of subsequent events. But the irregular action of Wilkes in this case was in various ways the cause of serious embarrassment. If the proceedings could not be fully justified, neither could they, in the then condition of affairs, and the excited state of public feeling, be censured and condemned. But the Secretary of the Navy, before hearing from Great Britain, before even the Administration had passed upon the subject, was compelled to recognize and approve or disapprove the act, and communicate the transaction in his annual navy report, just then to be submitted to the President and Congress. In that report, and in a congratulatory letter of the 30th of November, allusion is made to the irregularity of Wilkes, which, it is suggested, might be excused in view of the patriotic motives; "but it must by no means be permitted to constitute a precedent hereafter for the treatment of any similar infraction of neutral obligations by foreign vessels engaged in commerce or the carrying trade." This report, though bearing date of the 2d of December, the day on which Congress convened, was, as is usual with annual reports, delivered complete to the President at the last regular Cabinet meeting preceding the session, which was on Friday, the 29th of November, 1861, to be transmitted with the message. Of course the naval report was seen on that day by Mr. Sew-

ard, who until then had taken no exception to the capture; but on the succeeding day, the 30th of November, the date of the congratulatory letter to Wilkes, he wrote to Mr. Adams what the latter gentleman calls the "preliminary despatch that saved the dignity of the country."

These matters, it will be borne in mind, were weeks before hearing from England, and before Mr. Seward's elaborate answer of the 26th of December to the demand of the British government for the surrender of the emissaries. When Mr. Adams declares that "not a sign had been given by the President or any member of the Cabinet favorable to concession," at the time that answer was prepared, he commits an egregious mistake. The President was from the first willing to make concession. Mr. Blair advocated it. Mr. Seward was at the beginning opposed to any idea of concession which involved giving up the emissaries, but yielded at once, and with dexterity, to the peremptory demand of Great Britain. Let him have all the applause which belongs to him for the facility and diplomatic skill which he displayed in that change, but in doing so it is unjust to the President and others to misrepresent them, or to mistake or pervert the facts in regard to them or Mr. Seward.

The incidents selected from among many indicate something of the managing expediency, fertility of resources, and administrative manner of Mr. Seward, and illustrate the "superior intellectual power" and "force of moral discipline" which the "Memorial Address" undertakes to say enabled him to "direct affairs for the benefit of the nation, through the name of another." Acting at times from impulse, often without sufficient forethought of consequences—fond of displaying power—frequently exercising questionable authority—prompted in some degree by jobbing and lobby surroundings which, fostered at Albany and defeated at Chicago, followed him to Washington, where not a few of those followers contrived to grow rich as the country grew poor, Mr. Seward attempted and did many things which could scarcely be justified, but for which the Administration was responsible. It would be unjust to throw his eccentricities and errors upon others, and award to him the honors and credit of successful measures of administration which he did not originate.

The President, never unreasonably obstinate or wilful, was ever lenient and forbearing, even when his intentions were defeated, and sometimes yielded to proceedings that his judgment did not fully approve. In the generosity of his nature he was tolerant of acts where a more arbitrary and imperious mind would have been implacable and unforgiving. There were occasions, however, when, relying on his own convictions, and the exigency being great, he exercised the executive will—the one-man power—with intelligent determination and effect. His promptness and energy in an emergency were displayed on one memorable occasion, when danger was imminent and immediate decision necessary. It may be mentioned as illustrative of his executive ability, promptness, and self-reliance; for it was in the absence of Mr. Seward, and when those on whom he had a right to rely failed him and were despondent. Gloom and national disaster were upon the country, but the President met the crisis with firmness, rose with the exigency, and, independent of his Cabinet and against the general sentiment of the people, and by a sacrifice of personal feeling, adopted a course which results justified, and proved his ability as chief.

In the early period of the war the proceedings and operations of the military commanders were unsatisfactory, and nowhere equalled the general expectation. Too much was doubtless expected and too little accomplished. None were more disappointed or depressed by the slow progress made than the President himself. For a period he had hopes from McClellan, whose talents at organization were displayed to advantage when, in the summer of 1861, he took command at Washington, established order, and enforced good military administration. In some respects the President esteemed him to be superior to any of the generals with whom he had come in contact; but the autumn wore away in dilatory parades. With the change in the War Department in January, 1862, came the hostility of Secretary Stanton to McClellan, then General-in-Chief. The hesitating movements of that officer weakened the confidence of the President in his energy and military power. He still believed, however, that the General had superior military capacity and intelligence, but that he was inert, infirm of purpose; not quite ready to

do all that he had the ability to accomplish. He required pushing, and the President therefore took upon himself to order a forward movement of both the army and navy. But McClellan continued tardy, and the winter and spring delays, followed by the sluggish movements on the York peninsula and the reverses before Richmond, discouraged and greatly disheartened not only the President but the whole country. At this juncture, when, with large armies under him, he had more than he could perform in the line of his profession, McClellan in July wrote from his headquarters a very injudicious, not to say impertinent letter to the President in relation to the civil administration and the political conduct of affairs. This unwise letter, and the reverses of the army, with the active hostility of Stanton, brought Halleck, a vastly inferior man, to Washington. General Pope had preceded him, and, by an executive order creating the army of Virginia, had been placed in command of that army, then in front of Washington, to the infinite disgust of some of the older generals. This disgust was increased by his public gasconading proclamation reflecting on the proceedings of his seniors—on their "lines of retreat and bases of supplies," which must, he said, thenceforward be discarded. These blatant bulletins, instead of inspiriting the men, caused ridicule in the ranks. The soldiers were attached to their old officers, particularly to McClellan, and to a great extent sympathized with him and other generals in their dislike, almost contempt, of this junior commander. Pope had been brought from the West directly after Halleck reported he had accomplished extraordinary achievements—reports grossly untrue, and which Pope himself afterward refuted. On coming to Washington, Pope, who was ardent, and I think courageous, though not always discreet, very naturally fell into the views of Secretary Stanton, who improved every opportunity to denounce McClellan and his hesitating policy. Pope also reciprocated the commendations bestowed on him by Halleck, by uniting with Stanton and General Scott in advising that McClellan should be superseded, and Halleck placed in charge of military affairs at Washington. This, combined with the movements and the disasters before Richmond, enabled Stanton to get rid of McClellan at headquarters. One of the first orders of Halleck on reaching Washington after superseding McClellan, was for the withdrawal of the army of the Potomac from the vicinity of Richmond. This brought McClellan and his generals with their commands to the assistance of Pope, for whom they not only entertained no special regard, but some of them absolute hate. The orders to reinforce and assist Pope were consequently not obeyed with alacrity. There is no denying the fact that professional pride was allowed to encroach on patriotic duty in that momentous period. The selection of Pope to command that army may have been injudicious; he may not have been the man to take in hand and wield the immense force which met Lee and Jackson at the front; there may have been error on the part of Stanton and Halleck as well as Pope in slighting some of the older generals; the enmity of the Secretary of War toward McClellan may not without reason have been felt by him and his favorites as unjust; yet the welfare of the republic should not have been put in jeopardy to gratify personal, official, or professional resentments. The general in command, whether young or old, should at such a crisis have been earnestly and in good faith sustained. Had that been the case, the results of the second battle at Manassas or Bull Run might have been different. But Pope was defeated, and the army, sadly demoralized, came retreating to the Potomac. The War Department, and especially Stanton and Halleck, became greatly alarmed. On the 30th of August, in the midst of these disasters and before the result had reached us, though most damaging information in regard to McClellan, who lingered at Alexandria, was current, the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Chase, called upon me with a protest, signed by himself and Stanton, denouncing the conduct of McClellan and demanding his immediate dismissal. Two other members were ready to append their names after mine. I declined to sign the paper, which was in the handwriting of Stanton, not that I did not disapprove of the course of the General, but because the combination was improper and disrespectful to the President, who had selected his Cabinet to consult and advise with, not to conspire against him; besides, some of the charges or allusions in the paper I knew nothing of, and I had doubted the wisdom of recalling the army of the Potomac from Richmond, therein differing

from Chase and Stanton. The object in bringing that army back to Washington in order to start anew, march overland, and regain the abandoned position, I did not understand unless it was to get rid of McClellan; and if that was the object it would have been much better to place another general at the head of the army while it was yet on the James. But a majority of the Cabinet finally united in this proceeding, and on Monday, the 1st of September, the paper, somewhat modified and signed by four of the Cabinet officers, was brought me. Mr. Seward was at the time absent from Washington—I never doubted purposely absent—and not of the number. My refusal and perhaps my remarks prevented the matter from proceeding further. The indignation against McClellan was at the time intense in Washington and the country. The President never knew of this paper, but was not unaware of the popular feeling, in which he sympathized, and of the sentiments of the members of the Cabinet, aggravated by the hostility and strong if not exaggerated rumors sent out by the Secretary of War. Both Stanton and Halleck were, however, filled with apprehensions beyond others, as the army of stragglers and broken battalions on the last of August and first of September came rushing toward Washington.

At the stated Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, the 2d of September, while the whole community was stirred up and in confusion, and affairs were gloomy beyond anything that had previously occurred, Stanton entered the council room a few moments in advance of Mr. Lincoln and said, with great excitement, he had just learned from General Halleck that the President had placed McClellan in command of the forces in Washington. The information was surprising, and, in view of the prevailing excitement against that officer, alarming. The President soon came in, and in answer to an inquiry from Mr. Chase, confirmed what Stanton had stated. General regret was expressed, and Stanton with some feeling remarked that no order to that effect had issued from the War Department. The President, calmly but with some emphasis, said the order was his, and he would be responsible for it to the country. With a retreating and demoralized army tumbling in upon us, and alarm and panic in the community, it was necessary, the President said, that something should be done, but there seemed to be no one to do it. He therefore had directed McClellan, who knew this whole ground, who was the best organizer in the army, whose faculty was to organize and defend, and who would here act upon the defensive, to take this defeated and broken army and reorganize it. He knew full well the infirmities of McClellan, who was not an affirmative man; was worth little for an onward movement; but beyond any other officer he had the confidence of the army, and he could more efficiently and speedily reorganize it and put it in condition than any other general. If the Secretary of War, or any member of the Cabinet, would name a general that could do this as promptly and well, he would appoint him. For an active fighting general he was sorry to say McClellan was a failure; he had "the slows"; was never ready for battle, and probably never would be; but for this exigency, when organization and defence were needed, he considered him the best man for the service, and the country must have the benefits of his talents though he had behaved badly. The President said he had seen and given his opinion to General Halleck, who was still General-in-Chief; but Halleck had no plan or views of his own, proposed to do nothing himself, and fully approved his calling upon McClellan.

In stating what he had done the President was deliberate, but firm and decisive. His language and manner were kind and affectionate, especially toward two of the members, who were greatly disturbed; but every person present felt that he was truly the chief, and every one knew his decision was as fixed and unalterable as if given out with the imperious command and determined will of Andrew Jackson. A long discussion followed, closing with acquiescence in the decision of the President, but before separating, the Secretary of the Treasury expressed his apprehension that the reinstatement of McClellan would prove a national calamity.

In this instance the President, unaided by others, put forth with firmness and determination the executive will—the one-man power—against the temporary general sense of the community as well as of his Cabinet, two of whom it has been generally supposed had with him an influence almost as great as the Secretary of State. They had been ready to make

issue and resign their places unless McClellan was dismissed; but knowing their opposition, and in spite of it and of the general dissatisfaction in the community, the President had in that perilous moment exalted him to new and important trusts. In an interview with the President on the succeeding Friday, when only he and myself were present, he unburthened his mind freely. Military matters were still in confusion, without plan or purpose at headquarters. The Secretary of War, under Pope's defeat and McClellan's reinstatement, was not only disappointed, but dejected and dispirited. The President said most of our troubles grew out of military jealousies. Whether changing the plan of operations (discarding McClellan and placing Pope in command) was wise or not, was not now the matter in hand. These things, right or wrong, had been done. If the Administration had erred, the country should not have been made to suffer and our brave men cut down and butchered. Pope should have been sustained, but he was not. These personal and professional quarrels came in. Whatever may have been said to the contrary, it could not be denied that the army was with McClellan. He had so skilfully handled his troops in not getting to Richmond as to retain their confidence. The soldiers certainly had not transferred their confidence to Pope. He could, however, do no more good in this quarter. It was humiliating, after what had transpired and all we knew, to reward McClellan and those who failed to do their whole duty in the hour of trial, but so it was. Personal considerations must be sacrificed for the public good. He had kept aloof from the dissensions that prevailed, and intended to; "but," said he, "I must have McClellan to reorganize the army and bring it out of chaos. There has been a design, a purpose in breaking down Pope, without regard to the consequences to the country, that is atrocious. It is shocking to see and know this, but there is no remedy at present. McClellan has the army with him." These were the views and this the course of the President when there was general dismay in the country and confusion in the army, the rebels near the intrenchments of Washington, and some of the Cabinet alarmed and preparing to leave. The President was not insensible to the deficiencies or ignorant of the faults of McClellan, nor yet blind to and stubborn as regarded his better qualities. In placing him at the head of the army he went counter to the wishes of his friends, and forgetful of all else he subdued every personal feeling, and in the spirit of unselfish patriotism resolved to do what was for the true interest of the country. Had the General followed up the battle of Antietam, which took place a fortnight later, he would have retrieved the misfortunes of the peninsula and given the President additional reason to congratulate himself on the reinstatement; but the old dilatory infirmity remained, which strengthened the influence that persistently opposed him, and led to his being retired from the command of the army.

The President was a much more shrewd and accurate observer of the characteristics of men—better and more correctly formed an estimate of their power and capabilities—than the Secretary of State or most others. Those in the public service he closely scanned, but was deliberate in forming a conclusion adverse to any one he had appointed. In giving or withdrawing confidence he was discriminating and just in his final decision; careful never to wound unnecessarily the sensibilities of any for their infirmities, always ready to praise, but nevertheless firm and resolute in discharging the to him always painful duty of censure, reproof, or dismissal.

Du Pont he classed in the naval service with McClellan in the military. Both were intelligent, accomplished, and valuable officers in their way, but neither was the man for fierce encounter and desperate fighting. The two until tried had his support and all the confidence to which they were entitled, or which either had reason to expect. If the results at Port Royal were not followed up with the energy and vigor anticipated, the fault was, he justly considered, as much with the military as with the navy. But in the autumn of 1862 and winter of 1863 extensive preparations were made for retaking Fort Sumter and the capture of Charleston. Du Pont visited Washington in the autumn, and had consulted on the subject, but would listen to no suggestion that any other officer should be detailed for that especial service, which he claimed as a right and as within the limits of his blockade. Extraordinary efforts were accordingly made by the Navy

Department, which gave him a large portion of the best officers and vessels in the service that he might be successful. But time wore on, with no more effective demonstration than had been made by the army of the Potomac on the York peninsula. Du Pont, like McClellan, was constantly asking for more reinforcements, and the Navy Department strained every nerve to aid him, and often answered his requisitions at the expense of other squadrons.

The President, as well as the whole country, felt greatly interested in this subject; not that Charleston was of any great strategic importance, but it was the hotbed of secession, and there the rebellion had its origin. It was winter or early spring, and nothing had been accomplished, when the President one day said to me that he had but slight expectation that we should have any great success from Du Pont. "He, as well as McClellan," said Mr. Lincoln, "hesitates—has 'the slows.' McClellan always wanted more regiments; Du Pont is everlastingly asking for more gunboats—more ironclads. He will do nothing with any. He has intelligence and system, and will maintain a good blockade. You did well in selecting him for that command, but he will never take Sumter or get to Charleston. He is no Farragut, though unquestionably a good routine officer, who obeys orders and in a general way carries out his instructions." A few weeks served to verify all that the President had said on the subject. Du Pont died without planting the flag on Sumter or visiting Charleston.

The distinctive measure of Mr. Lincoln's administration, beyond all others that which makes it an era in our national history, is the decree of emancipation. This movement, almost revolutionary, was a step not anticipated by him when elected, and which neither he nor any of his Cabinet were prepared for or would have assented to when they entered upon their duties. He and they had, regardless of party discipline, resisted the schemes for the extension of slavery into free territory under the sanction of federal authority. All of them, though of different parties, were and ever had been opposed to slavery, but not one of them favored any interference with it by the national Government in the States where it was established or permitted. The assumption, after the acquisition of territory from Mexico, that slavery was a national and not a local institution, opened a new controversy in American politics, which contributed to the disintegration of old party organizations, each of which became in a measure sectional. The dissenting elements resisted the centralizing claim that slavery was national, not local; and ultimately, after a struggle of several years, they threw off old party allegiance and combined under a new organization, thenceforward known as Republican. In the first stages of this movement neither Mr. Lincoln nor Mr. Seward participated. Both of them had sympathized with what was known as the Free-soil party in 1848, but declined to become identified with it. They were politicians, and not then prepared to abandon the organization with which they had previously acted. Mr. Lincoln, with the free thought and independence of the men of the West, less trained and bound to party than the disciplined politicians in the old States, holding no official position, a quiet but observing and reflecting citizen, truthful, honest, faithful to his convictions, and with the mental strength and courage to avow and maintain them, early appreciated the important principles involved in this rising question, and boldly cast off the shackles of party in defence of the right, and earnestly, irrespective of any and all parties, opposed the extension and aggressions of slavery. Mr. Seward was in those days in office, trammelled by party followers and party surroundings. Trained during his whole public career in the severest discipline of party, indebted to it for his high position, always subservient to its decrees and requirements, active and exacting in enforcing its obligations, he had not the independence and moral stamina to free himself from the restraints and despotism of party, whatever were his sympathies, until that organization disbanded. The people of the West, who knew Mr. Lincoln and appreciated his capabilities, tried in 1856 to place him on the ticket with Fremont as a candidate for Vice-President. Although but slightly known in the East, such was the zeal and enthusiasm in his favor of those who knew him, that nothing but the expediency of selecting an Eastern man to be associated with Fremont, who was from the West, prevented his nomination in-

stead of Dayton. From the start he was a prominent Republican champion and leader, while Mr. Seward, a partisan politician, held off; was reluctant to leave the party with which he had been associated, hoping to make the new movement subservient to or a part of the Whig party. Mr. Lincoln had no such purpose; the principles involved were with him above mere party. With no fortune, unaided by metropolitan funds or pecuniary assistance from any quarter, he gave his time and mind with unstinted devotion to the cause of freedom, and in his memorable campaign with Douglas, alone and unassisted, he, through the empire State of the West, met the Senatorial giant on the questions of the extension of slavery, the rights of the States, the grants to and limitation of the powers of the General Government, and displayed ability and power which won the applause of the country, and drew from Douglas himself expressions of profound respect.

When the Republicans, in convention at Chicago, chose their standard-bearer, they wisely and properly selected as their representative the sincere and able man who had no great money power in his interest, no disciplined lobby, no host of party followers, but who, like David, confided in the justice of his cause, and with the simple weapons of truth and right met the Goliath of slavery aggression, before assembled multitudes, in many a well-contested debate. The popular voice was not in error, or its confidence misplaced, when it selected and elected Lincoln.

After his election, and after the war commenced, events forced upon Mr. Lincoln the emancipation of the slaves in the rebellious States. It was his act, a bold step, an executive measure originating with him, and was, as stated in the memorable appeal at the close of the final proclamation, invoking for it the considerate judgment of mankind, warranted alone by military necessity. He and the Cabinet were aware that the measure involved high and fearful responsibility, for it would alarm the timid everywhere, and alienate, at least for a time, the bold in the border States. The act itself could not have been justified or excused, and would never have been attempted, had the country been at peace; yet the movement seemed aggravated and more hazardous from the fact that the Union was weakened and imperilled by civil war. Results have proved that there was in the measure profound thought, statesmanship, courage, and far-seeing sagacity—consummate executive and administrative ability, which was, after some reverses, crowned with success. The nation, emerging from gloom and disaster, and the whole civilized world, united in awarding honor and gratitude to the illustrious man who had the mind to conceive and the courage and firmness to decree the emancipation of a race. Ten years after this event, when the patriot and philanthropist who decreed emancipation had been years in his grave, an attempt is made on a solemn occasion to award to one of his subordinates the honor and credit which justly belong to the great chief who decreed it. The Albany "Memorial Address" dwells on public measures, particularly during the war, but makes no allusion to this great act of Lincoln, nor to his merits in the great cause of freedom, for which he labored and in which he died, but declares his Secretary of State, a lifelong partisan politician, was always opposed to slavery, and that he "directed affairs for the benefit of the nation, through the name of another." It is unnecessary, after what has already been said, to comment on this assumed direction by a subordinate instead of the chief, or on the gross injustice to Mr. Lincoln; but it should be known that the Secretary of State neither originated nor directed the affairs of the Government on the great measure of emancipation. Mr. Seward was undoubtedly opposed to slavery, and so was every member of the Administration, but his opposition never led him to propose any measure of relief to the country, or to take any steps against slavery which would be likely to impair the Whig party or the Whig organization while it existed. No specific act of his—no measure or distinct proposition to emancipate the slaves—is mentioned, for there was none. In the administration of the government he took no advance step on the slavery question. Mr. Lincoln was the pioneer and responsible author, while the Secretary of State studiously avoided any expression of opinion in regard to it. The Secretaries of War and Navy were compelled to act in relation to fugitives from slavery who sought protection under the Union flag—an anomalous question—but they could obtain no counsel or advice from the Secretary of State how to act. He not only

avoided giving an opinion, but recommended that the Administration should abstain from any decisive stand on that controverted and embarrassing subject.

The President, who is represented as incompetent for his position, and whose mind in 1861, it is said, "had not even opened to the crisis," was reluctant to meddle with this disturbing element. Yet earlier than others he rightly appreciated what the Government would have to encounter, and was convinced it must be taken in hand and disposed of. The magnitude of the rebellion, and the nature of the contest, compelled him, after the civil war had been carried on for twelve months, to grapple with this formidable subject. His first movement, in March, 1862, was cautious and deliberate, characterized by great prudence and forethought, and designed not to alarm the friends of the Union by any harsh or offensive proceeding. It was an ameliorated plan for the gradual abolition of slavery by action of the States respectively, with coöperation and assistance of the General Government. This plan of voluntary and compensated emancipation was pressed upon Congress and the border slave States, with great earnestness, by the President. Mr. Blair and Mr. Bates, both residents of the border slave States, were the only members of the Cabinet who cordially seconded these first early measures in the cause of emancipation. Their associates cheerfully assented to and acquiesced in the proposition, but had neither faith nor zeal in its success; nor did Mr. Seward or any one of them suggest a different or more available plan for national relief. The subject was beset on every side with difficulty, requiring for its manipulation and disposition the highest order of administrative and executive ability. No one more than the President was impressed with the difficulties to be met, and at the same time with the imperative necessity of decisive action. The details of these proceedings, and the final determined stand taken by him—not by the Secretary of State or any of the Cabinet—to decree by an executive order the emancipation of the slaves in the rebellious States, have been elsewhere related. It was after all efforts for voluntary emancipation by the States interested, with pecuniary aid from the national treasury, had failed. To Mr. Seward and myself the President communicated his purpose, and asked our views, on the 13th of July, 1862. It was the day succeeding his last unsuccessful and hopeless conference with the representatives in Congress from the border slave States, at a gloomy period of our affairs, just after the reverses of our armies under McClellan before Richmond. The time, he said, had arrived when we must determine whether the slave element should be for or against us. Mr. Seward, represented as a superior in "native intellectual power," and as having forty years previously chosen his side, and as at that early period having claimed "a right in the government to emancipate slaves," was appalled and not prepared for this decisive step, when Mr. Lincoln made known to us his intention, by an executive order, to emancipate the slaves. Startled with so broad and radical a proposition, he informed the President that the consequences of such an act were so momentous that he was not prepared to advise on the subject without further reflection. While Mr. Seward hesitated, and had the subject under consideration, the President deliberately prepared his preliminary proclamation, which met the approval, or at least the acquiescence, of the whole Cabinet, though there were phases of opinion not entirely in accord with the proceeding. Mr. Blair, an original emancipationist, and committed to the principle, thought the time to issue the order inopportune, and Mr. Bates desired that the deportation of the colored race should be coincident with emancipation. Aware that there were shades of difference among his counsellors, and hesitation and doubt with some in view of the vast responsibility and its consequences, the President devised his own scheme, held himself alone accountable for the act, and, unaided and unassisted, prepared each of the proclamations of freedom. Mr. Seward in no way or form originated or was responsible for that important measure, did not in any way "direct affairs" in regard to it, was in no other way cognizant of it beyond his colleagues except as communicated to him and myself on the 13th of July, at its inception. Yet in the "Memorial Address" Mr. Seward is represented as the lifelong leading opponent of slavery, beyond others the master spirit in the Lincoln Administration. The President and this great

event are ignored, and the inference is intended to be conveyed that the Secretary of State, who "chose his side" in the morning of life adverse to slavery, is entitled to the credit; for it is represented that the President was a mere secondary personage, and the Secretary of State directed affairs in the name of Mr. Lincoln, who was to "reap the honors due chiefly to Mr. Seward's labors."

To unfold the leaves of suppressed history, and correct the errors and perversions which interested—and many of them still living—persons have spread abroad and inculcated, is a thankless task, and will subject him who performs it to partisan abuse. It is scarcely to be expected that the present generation will know or be able to appreciate the labors and acts of those who, intrusted with the government in a trying period, took upon themselves immense and unprecedented responsibilities, or that a rightful discrimination will at this early day, if ever, be made as regards those who participated in the movements which eventuated in the salvation of the Union and the emancipation of a race. The late labored effort of the distinguished gentleman of an historic family and name to depreciate the talents and services of Abraham Lincoln, and to crown another with honors that justly belong to him, is a specimen of lamentable partisan prejudice and error. It is but one and perhaps the last of many attempts of a similar character, to take from the brow of Lincoln the wreath of merit that is justly his—to deprive him of the reward due for his labor, and give to another credit for his acts. It is not the first time in our history when like injustice has been witnessed toward our Chief Magistrates. Volumes have been written to prove that Hamilton controlled Washington and directed the affairs of the nation in the name of his chief. Van Buren, it was claimed, controlled the imperious will of Jackson and dictated his measures. Undoubtedly each had influence with his chief, perhaps more than he deserved. The same may be said of Mr. Seward, who had undeniably influence with Mr. Lincoln, but who was no more the directing mind of the Administration of Lincoln, but really much less, than was Hamilton of Washington or Van Buren of Jackson. Both Hamilton and Seward are charged with having given countenance to this false impression, which, however, redounds to the credit of neither.

In these papers, written to correct the misconceptions of Mr. Adams, and misrepresentations of the Albany "Memorial Address," incidents of what occurred would, I thought, better than mere contradictory assertions, illustrate the acts, the executive management and administrative ability, as well as the capacity and mental energy, of the men whose traits are involved in the statements which have been made.

Of the incidents that took place during the administration of Mr. Lincoln, some of which and the attending circumstances could not have been disclosed at the time of their occurrence, there are in most cases living witnesses. The transactions of an earlier date are of public notoriety and matters of record, commencing with the organized anti-masonic proscription, and embracing the rise and fall of that and subsequent parties, down to and including the much misrepresented proceedings at the Chicago Convention in 1860.

It has been no part of my purpose to magnify or overstate the qualities or to give undue credit to the labors and abilities of Mr. Lincoln, still less to do injustice to Mr. Seward, who is represented in the "Memorial Address" as overshadowing his chief. Mr. Lincoln was in many respects a remarkable, though I do not mean to say an infallible man. No true delineation or photograph of his intellectual capacity and attributes has ever been given, nor shall I attempt it. His vigorous and rugged but comprehensive mind, his keen and shrewd sagacity, his intellectual strength and mental power, his genial, kindly temperament, with charity for all and malice toward none—his sincerity, unquestioned honesty, and homely suavity, made him popular as well as great. Had he survived to this day, the Albany "Memorial Address" would have been of a different character, and its pages not marred with paragraphs which reflect on his ability and do injustice to his memory.

GIDEON WELLES.